

M O R I Æ  
E N C O M I U M;  
OR, THE  
P R A I S E  
O F  
F O L L Y.

Written Originally in *Latine*, By  
*Des. Erasmus of Rotterdam.*

And Translated into *Englisb*,  
By *John Wilson.*

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Licensed, *Roger L' Estrange.*

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**E R A S M U S**  
**O F**  
**ROTTERDAM,**

To his Friend

**THOMAS MORE, Health:**

**A** *S* I was coming, a while since, out of Italy, for England, that I might not waste all that time I was to sit on Horsback, in foolish and illiterate Fables, I chose rather, one while to revolve with my self, something of our common Studies, and other while, to enjoy the remembrance of my Friends, of whom, I left here, some no lesse learned, than pleasant; Amongst these, you, my More, came first in my mind, whose memory, though absent your self, gives me such delight in my absence, as when present with you, I ever found in your company; than which, let me

A 2

perish,

## Erasmus his Epistle

perish, if in all my life, I ever met with any thing more delectable : And therefore, being satisfy'd that something was to be done, and that, that time was no wise proper for any serious matter, I resolv'd to make some sport with The Praise of Folly : But who the Devil put that in thy head ? you'l say ; The first thing, was your surname, of More, which comes so near the word Moria (Folly) as you are far from the thing ; And that you are so, all the world will clear you : In the next place, I conceiv'd this exercise of wit, wou'd not be least approv'd by you, inasmuch as you are wont to be delighted with such kind of mirth, that is to say, neither unlearned, if I am not mistaken, nor altogether insipid, and in the whole course of your life, have play'd the part of a Democritus : And though, such is the excellence of your Judgement, that 'twas ever contrary to that of the peoples, yet such is your incredible affability, and sweetness of temper, that you both can, and delight to carry your self to all men, a man of all hours : Wherefore, you will not only, with good will accept this small Declamation, but take upon you the defence of 't, forasmuch, as being dedicated to you, it is now no longer mine, but yours : But perhaps, there will not be wanting some wranglers, that may cavil, and charge me, partly, that these toys are lighter than may become a Divine, and partly, more biting, than may beseeem the modesty of a Christian, and consequently exclaim, that

## To Sir Thomas More.

*I resemble the Ancient Comedy, or another Lucian, and snarle at every thing : But I would have them, whom the lightness, or foolery of the Argument may offend, to consider, that mine is not the first of this kind, but the same thing, that has been often practis'd even by great Authors ; when Homer, so many Ages since, did the like with the battel of Frogs and Mice ; Virgil, with the Gnat, and Puddings ; Ovid, with the Nut ; When Polycrates, and his Corrector Isocrates, extol'd Tyranny ; Glauco, Injustice ; Favorinus, Deformity, and the quartan Ague ; Synescius, Baldness ; Lucian, the Fly, and Flattery : When Seneca made such sport with Claudius's Canonizations ; Plutarch, with his Dialogue between Ulysses and Gryllus ; Lucian and Apuleius, with the Asse ; and some other, I know not who, with the Hog that made his last Will and Testament, of which also, even S. Jerome makes mention : And therefore if they please, let 'em suppose I play'd at Tables for my diversion, or if they had rather have it so, that I rid on a Hobby-horse : for what injustice is it, that when we allow every course of life its Recreation, that Study only, shou'd have none, especially, when such toys, are not without their serious matter, and foolery is so handled, that the Reader that is not altogether thick-skul'd, may reap more benefit from 't, than from some men's crabbyish, and specious Arguments ? As when one,*

*A 3*

*together,*

## Erasmus his Epistle

together, on the praise of Rhetorick, or Philosophy; another, makes a Panegyrick to a Prince; another, encourages him to a War against the Turks; another, tells you what will become of the world, after himself is dead; and another, finds out some new device for the better ordering of Goats-wooll: for as nothing is more trifling than to treat of serious matters triflingly; so nothing carries a better grace, than so to discourse of trifles, as a man may seem to have intended them least: For my own part, Let other men judge of what I have written; though yet, unlesse an overweening opinion of my self, may have made me blind in my own cause, I have prais'd Folly, but not altogether foolishly: And now, to say somewhat, to that other cavil, of biting; this liberty was ever permitted to all mens wits, to make their smart witty reflections on the common errors of mankind, and that too, without offence, as long as this liberty does not run into licentiousness; which makes me the more admire the tender ears, of the men of this age, that can away with solemn Titles, Nay, you'l meet with some, so preposterously religious, that they will sooner endure the broadest scoffs, even against Christ himself, than hear the Pope or a Prince be toucht in the least, especially, if it be any thing that concerns their profit; whereas he that so taxes the lives of men, without naming any one in particular, whither I pray, may he be said to bite, or rather to teach, and admonish? or otherwise,

## To Sir Thomas More.

wife, I beseech ye, under how many notions do I tax myself? Besides, he that spares no sort of men, cannot be said to be angry, with any one in particular, but the vices of all; And therefore, if there shall happen to be any one, that shall say he is hit, he will but discover, either his guilt or fear: Saint Jerome sported in this kind with more freedome, and greater sharpnesse, not sparing sometimes, mens very name. But I, besides that I have wholly avoided it, I have so moderated my stile, that the understanding Reader, will easily perceive, my endeavours herein, were rather to make mirth, than bite: Nor have I, after the Example of Juvenal, raked up that forgotten sink of filth and ribaldry, but laid before you, things, rather ridiculous, than dishonest: And now, if there be any one, that is yet dissatisfied, let him at least remember, that it is no dishonour, to be discommended by Folly, and having brought her in, speaking, it was but fit, that I kept up the character of the person. But why do I run over these things to you, a person so excellent an Advocate, that no man better defends his Client, though the cause many times, be none of the best? Farewell, my lest disputant More, and stoutly defend your Moræ.

From the Country,  
the 5th. of the  
Ides of June.

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of the Crown in Fleetstreet, between the two  
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R sult of false Principles. 4.



Moriæ Encomium;  
OR,  
*The Praise of Folly.*

*An Oration, of feigned matter, spoken by  
Folly in her own Person.*

A

 T what rate soever the World  
 talks of me ( for I am not ig-  
 norant, what an ill report *Folly*  
 hath got, even amongst the  
 most Foolish ) yet, that I am  
 that She, that onely She, whose  
 Deity recreates both gods and men; even this  
 is a sufficient Argument, That I no sooner stept  
 up to speak to this full Assembly, than all your  
 faces put on a kind of new, and unwonted plea-  
santness



fantness; so suddenly have you clear'd your  
 brows, and with so frolique and hearty a laugh-  
 ter given me your applause; that, in troth,  
 as many of you as I behold, on every side of  
 me, seem to me, no less than *Homers's* gods,  
 drunk with *Nectar* and *Nepenthe*; whereas be-  
 fore, ye sat as lumpish and penlive, as if ye  
 had come ( *à Trophonii specu* ) from consulting  
 an Oracle. And as it usually happens, when  
 the Sun begins to shew his Beams; or when,  
 after a sharp Winter, the Spring breathes a-  
 fresh on the Earth, all things immediately get  
 a new face, new colour; and recover, as it were,  
 a certain kind of youth again: In like man-  
 ner, by but beholding me, ye have in an in-  
 stant gotten another kind of Countenance.  
 and so, what the otherwise great Rhetoricians,  
 with their tedious, and long-studied Orations,  
 can hardly effect ( to wit ) To remove the trou-  
 ble of the Mind, I have done it at once, with  
 my single look: But if ye ask me, Why I  
 appear before you in this strange dress, be  
 pleas'd to lend me your ears, and I'll tell you;  
 not those ears ( I mean ) ye carry to Church,  
 but abroad with ye, such as ye are wont to  
 prick up to Jugglers, Fools, and Buffons, and  
 such as our Friend *Midas*, once gave to *Pan*;  
 for I am dispos'd awhile, to play the So-  
 phister with ye; not of their sort, who, now  
 adays



days, buzle Young-mens heads with certain empty notions, and curious trifles, yet teach them nothing, but a more than Womanish obstinacy of scolding: but I'll imitate those Antients, who, that they might the better avoid that infamous appellation of (*Sophi*, or) *Wise*, chose rather to be call'd *Sophisters*: Their business was to celebrate the Praises of the gods and valiant men. And the like Encomium shall ye hear from me, but neither of *Hercules*, nor *Solon*, but mine own dear Self, that is to say, *Folly*: Nor do I esteem those Wise-men a rush, that call it a foolish, and insolent thing to praise ones self. Be it as foolish as they would make it, so they confess it proper: and what can be more, than that *Folly* be her own Trumpet? For who can set me out better than my self, unless perhaps I could be better known to another, than to my self? Though yet, I think it somewhat more modest, than the general practice of our Nobles, and Wise men, who throwing away all shame, hire some flattering Orator, or Lying Poet, from whose mouth they may hear their praises, that is to say, meer lyes; and yet, composing themselves with a seeming modesty, spread out their Peacocks plumes, and erect their Crests, whilst this impudent Flatterer equals a man of nothing to the gods, and pro-

poles him, as an absolute pattern of all Virtue, that's wholly a stranger to't, sets out a pittiful Jay in others Feathers, washes the Black-moor white, and lastly (*ex musca Elephantem*) swells a Gnat to an Elephant: In short, I will follow that old Proverb, that says, *He may lawfully praise himself, that lives far from Neighbours*: Though, by the way, I cannot but wonder, at the ingratitude, shall I say, or negligence of Men, who, notwithstanding they honour me in the first place, and are willing enough to confess my bounty, yet not one of them, for these so many ages, has there been, who in some thankful Oration, has set out the praises of Folly; when yet there has not wanted them, whose elaborate endeavours, have extol'd Tyrants, Agues, Flyes, Baldness, and such other Pests of Nature, to their own loss of both time and sleep. And now ye shall hear from me a plain extemporary speech, but so much the truer; nor would I have ye think it, like the rest of Orators, made for the Ostentation of Wit; for these, as ye know, when they have been beating their heads some thirty years about an Oration, and, at last, perhaps produce somewhat, that was never their own, shall yet swear they compos'd it in three dayes, and that too for diversion: whereas I ever lik't it best, to speak (*quicquid*  
in

in *buccam venerit*) whatever came first out; But let none of ye expect from me, that, after the manner of Rhetoricians, I should go about to Define what I am, much less, use any Division; for I hold it equally unlucky, to circumscribe her, whose Deity is universal, or make the least Division in that Worship, about which every thing is so generally agree'd: Or to what purpose, think ye, should I describe my self, when I am here present before ye, and ye behold me speaking? For I am, as ye see, that true and onely giver of wealth, whom the Greeks call *Moeia*, the Latines *Stultitia*, (and our plain English, *Folly*;) Or what need was there to have said so much, as if my very looks were not sufficient to inform ye, who I am? Or as if any man mistaking me for *Wisdom*, could not at first sight convince himself by my face, the true index of my mind? I am no Counterfeit, nor do I carry one thing in my looks and another in my breast: No, I am in every respect so like my self, that neither can they dissemble me, who arrogate to themselves, the appearance and title of *Wise men*, and walk (*in purpura similes*) like *Asses in Scarlet-hoods*; though after all their hypocrisie, *Midas's* ears will discover their Master: A most ingrateful generation of men, that when they are wholly given up to my

party, are yet publickly asham'd of the name, as taking it for a reproach ; for which cause, since in truth they are ( *Μαγδαλοι* ) *Fools*, and yet would appear to the World, to be *Wise-men*, and *Thales's*, Wee'll ev'n call 'em ( *Μαγδοποι* ) *Wise-fools* : Nor will it be amiss also, to imitate the Rhetoricians of our times, who think themselves in a manner Gods, if, like Horse-leeches, they can but appear to be double-tongu'd ; and believe they have done a mighty act, if in their Latin Orations, they can but shuffle-in some ends of Greek ( like Mosaick-work ) though altogether by head and shoulders, and less to the purpose : And if they want hard words, they run over some Worm-eaten Manuscript, and pick out half a Dozen of the most old and obsolete, to confound their Reader ; believing, no doubt, that they that understand their meaning, will like it the better ; and they that do not, will admire it the more, by how much the lesse they understand it : Nor, is this way of ours, of admiring what seems most Forreign, without it's particular grace ; for if there happen to be any more ambitious than others, they may give their applause with a smile, and like the Ass ( *τὰ ὄτα κινῶσι* ) *shake their ears*, that they may be thought to understand more, than the rest of their neighbours. But to come to the purpose ;

purpose : I have giv'n ye my name : but what Epithet shall I adde ? What ? but that of *the most Foolish* ? For by what properer name , can so great a goddess as *Folly* , be known to her Disciples ? And because it is not alike known to all , from what stock I am sprung ; with the Muses good leave , I'll do my endeavour to satisfie you : But yet neither the first *Chaos* , *Orcus* , *Saturn* , or *Japhet* , nor any of those thred-barè musty Gods , were my Father , but ( *Plutus* ) *Riches* ; That only he , that is , in spight of *Hesiod* , *Homer* , nay , and *Jupiter* himself ( *Divûm Pater atque Hominum Rex* ) *the Father of Gods and Men* ; at whose single beck , ( as heretofore , so at present ) all things Sacred and Prophane are turn'd topsie turvy : According to whose Pleasure , War , Peace , Empire , Counsels , Judgements , Assemblies , Wedlocks , Bargains , Leagues , Laws , Arts , all things Light or Serious——I want breath——in short , all the publick and private business of mankind , is govern'd ; Without whose help , all that Herd of Gods , of the Poets making , and those few of the better sort of the rest , either would not be at all ; or , if they were , they would be but ( *οἰκιστῆς* ) *such as live at home , and keep a poor house to themselves* ; and to whomsoever hee's an Enemy , 'tis not *Pallas* her self that can befriend him :

as on the contrary, he whom he favours, may lead *Jupiter*, and his Thunder in a string: This is my Father ( — *Hujus me gloriæ esse* ) and in him I glory: Nor did he produce me from his brain, as *Jupiter*, that sowre and ill-look'd *Pallas*; but ( *ex Neotete Nympha* ) of that lovely *Nymph*, call'd *Youth*, the most beautiful, and galliard of all the rest: Nor was I, like that limping Black-smith, begot in the sad and irksome bonds of Matrimony; but, which is much more pleasant ( *ἐν φιλότῃσι μυχθεῖς* ) in the heat of lust, as says our Father *Homer*: Yet, mistake me not, 'twas not that blind, and decrepit *Plutus* in *Aristophanes*, that got me, but such as he was in his full strength, and pride of youth; and not that onely, but at such a time when he had been well heated with Nectar, of which he had, at one of the Banquets of the Gods, taken a dose extraordinary: And as to the place of my birth, forasmuch as now adays, that is look'd upon, as a main point of Nobility, it was neither ( like *Apollo's* ) in the floating *Delos*, nor ( *Venus-like* ) on the rolling Sea, nor in any of blind *Homer's* as blind Caves; but in the fortunate Islands, where ( — *sponte sua per se dabit omnia tellus* ) all things grew, without plowing, or sowing; Where neither Labour, nor Old-age, nor Disease, was ever heard of; and in  
whole

whose fields, neither Daffadil, Mallows, O-  
nyons, Beans, and such contemptible things  
would ever grow; But, on the contrary,  
Rue, Angelica, Buglosse, Marjoram, Tre-  
voiles, Roses, Violets, Lillies, and all the  
Gardens of *Adonis*, invite both your sight, and  
your smelling. And being thus born, I did not  
begin the world, as other Children are wont,  
with crying; but streight perch'd up, and  
smil'd on my mother: Nor do I envy to the  
great *Jupiter*, the Goat his Nurse, forasmuch  
as I was suckled by two jolly Nymphs, to wit,  
*Drunkennes*, the daughter of *Bacchus*, and  
*Ignorance* of *Pan*: And as for such my com-  
panions, and followers, as ye perceive about  
me, if you have a mind to know who they are,  
ye are not like to be the wiser for me, unlesse  
it be in Greek: This here which you observe  
with that proud cast of her eye is (*φιλαυσία*)  
*Self-love*; She with the smiling countenance,  
that is ever and anon clapping her hands, is  
(*Κολακία*) *Flattery*; She that looks as if she  
were half asleep, is (*Λήθη*) *Oblivion*; She  
that sits leaning on both Elbows with her hands  
clutch'd together, is (*Μισοπονία*) *Laziness*:  
She with the Garland on her head, and that  
smells so strong of perfumes, is (*Ἡδονή*)  
*Pleasure*: She with those staring eyes, mo-  
ving here and there, is (*Ἄγεια*) *Madness*:  
She



She with the smooth Skin, and full pamper'd body, is (Τρυφή) *Wantonness*: And as to the two Gods that ye see with them, the one is (Κῆμῶ) *Intemperance*; the other, (Νύχτη) *Dead Sleep*. These, I say, are my household Servants, and, by their faithful Counsels, I have subjected all things to my Dominion, and erected an empire over Emperors themselves: Thus have ye had my Lineage, Education, and Companions. And now, lest I may seem to have taken upon me the name of Goddess, without cause; you shall in the next place understand, how far my Deity extends, and what advantage by't I have brought, both to Gods and Men. For, if it was not unwisely said by some body, That this only is to be a God, To help Men; and if they are deservedly enroll'd among the Gods, that first brought in Corn, and Wine, and such other things, as are for the common good of mankind; Why am not I of right (the ἄλφα οὐ) *first* of all the gods, who being but one, yet bestow all things on all men? For first, What is more sweet or more precious than Life? And yet from whom can it more properly be said to come, than from me? For neither (ὀβριμότης Palladis hasta) *the Crab-favour'd Pallas's Spear*, nor (νεφέλη γαστήρ Jovis agis) *the Cloud-gathering Jupiters Shield*, either beget, or propagate mankind; But even he himself, the Father



per of Gods, and King of Men (*qui nutu  
 mefaciat Olympum*) at whose very beck the  
 heavens shake, must lay-by his forked thunder,  
 and those looks wherewith he conquer'd the  
 Titans, and with which at pleasure he frights  
 the rest of the Gods, and, like a Common  
 Stage-player, put on a Disguise, as often as he  
 comes about that, which now and then he do's,  
 that is to say (*παιδοποιῶν*) the getting of chil-  
 dren: And the Stoicks too, that conceive  
 themselves next to the Gods, yet shew me one  
 of them, nay, the veryest Bygot of the Sect,  
 and if he do not put off his beard, the badge  
 of Wisdom, though yet it be no more than  
 what is common with him and Goats; yet at  
 least, he must lay-by his supercilious Gravity,  
 smooth his forehead, shake off his rigid Prin-  
 ciples, and, for some time, commit an act of  
 folly, and dotage: In fine, that Wiseman,  
 whosoever he be, if he intends to have Chil-  
 dren, must have recourse to me. But why, ac-  
 cording to my wonted way, do not I speak  
 more plainly to ye? Is it the head, I pray, or  
 face, or breast, or hand, or ear, which yet  
 we reckon our comely parts, that begets, or  
 brings forth Gods, and Men? I think not; but  
 even that part, which is so foolish, and ridicu-  
 lous, that I cannot so much as name it without  
 laughter; This, this is that holy spring, from  
 whence

whence all things more truly draw their being  
than from *Pythagora's* ( *Quaternio* ) mixture  
of *Elements* : But tell me, I beseech ye  
What Man is that, would submit his neck,  
the Noose of Wedlock, if, as Wisemen should  
he did but first truly weigh the inconvenienc  
of the thing? Or what Woman is there, would  
ever go to't, did she seriously consider, either  
the peril of Child-bearing, or the trouble o  
bringing them up? So then, if ye owe your  
beings to Wedlock, ye owe that Wedlock, to  
this my follower, *Madness* ; and what ye owe  
to me, I have already told ye : Again, she  
that has but once try'd, what it is, would she  
do ye think, make a second venture, if  
were not for my other Companion, *Oblivion* ?  
Nay, even *Venus* her self, notwithstanding  
what ever *Lucretius* has said, would not deny,  
but that all her vertue were lame, and fruitless,  
without the help of my Deity : For out of that  
little, odd, ridiculous May-game, came the  
supercilious Philosophers, in whose room have  
succeeded, a kind of people, the world calls  
Monks, Cardinals, Priests, and the most holy  
Popes : And Lastly, all that Rabble of the  
Poets-Gods, with which Heaven is so thrack'd  
and throng'd, that, though it be of so vast an  
extent, they are hardly able to croud one by  
another : But I think it a small matter, that  
ye

thus owe your beginning of life to me,  
 unless I also shew you, that, whatever be-  
 nefit you receive in the progress of it, is of  
 my gift likewise: For, what other is this? Can  
 that be call'd life, where ye take away plea-  
 sure? Oh! Do ye like what I say! I knew  
 none of you could have so little Wit, or so  
 much folly, or Wisdom rather, as to be of  
 any other opinion: for even the *Stoicks*  
 themselves, that so severely cry'd down plea-  
 sure, did but handsomly dissemble, and rail'd  
 against it to the common People, to no other  
 end, but that having discourag'd them from it,  
 they might the more plentifully enjoy it them-  
 selves: But tell me, by *Jupiter*, what part of  
 mans life is that, that is not sad, crabbed, unplea-  
 sant, insipid, troublesome, unless it be sea-  
 soned with Pleasure, that is to say, *Folly*? For  
 the proof of which, the never-sufficiently  
 prais'd *Sophocles*, in that his happy Elogy of  
 us ( *Ἐν τῷ ῥητορικῷ μυστήρι, ἡδίστη βίη, To*  
*know nothing, is the only happiness* ) might  
 be Authority enough; but that I intend  
 to take every particular by it's self. And  
 first; Who knows not, but a mans Infan-  
 cy, is the merriest part of life to himself,  
 and most acceptable to others? For, what  
 is that in them, which we kiss, embrace,  
 cherish, nay Enemies succour; but this  
 witch-

witchcraft or Folly? Which, wise Nature did of purpose give them into the world with them, that they might the more pleasantly passe-over the toil of Education, and as it were flatter the care and diligence of their Nurses: And then for Youth, which is in such reputation everywhere; how do all men favour it, study to advance it, and lend it their helping hand? And whence, I pray, all this Grace? Whence, but from me? by whose kindness, as it understands, as little as may be, it is also for that reason, the higher priviledged from exceptions; and I am mistaken, if, when it is grown up, and, by experience and discipline, brought to favour something like Man, if in the same instant that beauty does not fade, it's liveliness decay, it's pleasantness grow flat, and it's briskness fail: And by how much the further it runs from me, by so much the less it lives, till it comes to (—*molesta Senectus*) the burthen of Old age, not onely hateful to others, but to it self also: Which also were altogether insupportable, did not I pitty it's condition, in being present with it, and, as the Poets-gods were wont to assist such as were dving with some pleasant Metamorphosis, help their decrepitness, as much as in me lies, by bringing them back to a second childhood, from whence they are not improperly called (Πα-

λιμπαιδας

*διπλάδας* ) *Twice-Children* : Which, if ye ask  
 me how I do it, I shall not be shy in the point.  
 I bring them to our River *Lethæ* ; for it's  
 spring-head rises in the Fortunate Islands : and  
 that other of Hell, is but a Brook in compari-  
 son ) from which, as soon as they have drunk  
 down a long forgetfulness, they wash away by  
 degrees, the perplexity of their minds, and so  
 wax young again : But perhaps, you'll say,  
 They are foolish & doting : Admit it ; 'Tis the  
 very essence of Child-hood ; as if to be such  
 were not to be a fool ? Or that, that condi-  
 tion had any thing pleasant in it, but that it un-  
 derstood nothing ? for, who would not look  
 upon that Child as a Prodigy, that should  
 have as much Wisdom as a Man ? according  
 to that common Proverb ( *Odi puerulum præ-  
 coci sapientiâ* ) *I do not like a Child that is a*  
*Man too soon* : Or who would endure a Con-  
 verse, or Friendship with that Old-man, who, to  
 so large an experience of things, had joyn'd an  
 equal strength of mind, and sharpness of judge-  
 ment ? And therefore for this reason it is, that  
 Old-age dotes ; and that it does so, it is behol-  
 ding to me : yet not withstanding, is this do-  
 ting exempt from all those cares that distract  
 a Wiseman ; he is not the less pot-Companion ;  
 nor is he sensible of that burden of life, which  
 the more manly Age finds enough to do to  
 stand

stand upright under't: And sometimes too, like *Plautus's* Old-man, he returns to his three Letters ( *A. M. O.* ) the most unhappy of all things living, if he rightly understood, what he did in't: And yet, so much do I befriended him, that I make him well receiv'd of his friends, and no unpleasant Companion; for as much as, according to *Homer*, *Nistor's discourse was pleasanter than Honey*, ——— *Melle du'cior fluit Oratio* whereas *Achilles's* was both bitter and malicious; and that of Old-men, as he has it in another place, florid: In which respect also, they have this advantage of children, in that they want the onely pleasure of t'others life, we'll suppose it prating: Adde to this, that old men are more eagerly delighted with children, and they again, with Old-men ( ——— *ὁμοίον ἀγχι θάδε ἐς τὸν ὁμοίον* ) like to like, quoth the *Divet* to the *Collier*: For what difference between them, but that the one has more wrinckles and years upon his head than the other? Otherwise the brightness of their hair, toothless mouth, weakness of body, love of Milk, broken speech, chatting, toying, forgetfulness, inadvertency; and, briefly, all other their actions, agree in every thing: and by how much the nearer they approach to this Old-age, by so much they grow backward, into the likeness of Children; until, like them, they

pass

pass from life, to death, without any weariness of the one, or sense of t'other : And, now, let him that will, compare the benefits they receive by me, with the Metamorphoses of the Gods; of whom, I shall not mention, what they have done in their pettish humours, but where they have been most favourable; turning one into a Tree, another into a Bird, a third into a Grasshopper, Serpent, or the like; as if there were any difference between perishing, and being another thing! But I restore the same man, to the best, and happiest part of his life. And if Men would but refrain from all commerce with Wisdom, and give up themselves to be govern'd by me, they should never know, what it were to be old, but to lase themselves with a perpetual youth: Do but observe our grim Philosophers, that are perpetually beating their brains on knotty Subjects, and for the most part, you'll find them grown old, before they are scarce young; and whence is it, but that thier continual, and restless thoughts, insensibly prey upon their spirits, and dry up their Radical Moisture? Whereas, on the contrary, my fat fools, are as plump, and round as a *Westphalian Hogg*; and never sensible of old age, unless perhaps, as sometimes it rarely happens, they come to be infected with Wisdom; So



hard a thing it is, for a man to be happy in all things: and to this purpose, is that no small testimony of the Proverb, that sayes, *Folly is the onely thing, that keeps Youth at a stay, and Old age afar off*; as it is verifi'd in the *Brabanders*, of whom, there goes this common saying, *That Age, which is wont to render other Men wiser, makes them the greater Fools*; and yet there is scarce any Nation, of a more jocund converse, or that is less sensible of the misery of Old age, than they are: And to these as in scituation, so for manner of living, come nearest, my friends the *Hollanders*; and what should I not call them mine, since they are diligent observers of me, that they are commonly call'd by my name? of which they are far from being asham'd, they rather pride themselves in't: Let the foolish world then be packing, and seek out *Medeas*, *Circes*, *Venefices*, *Aurora's*, and I know not what other Fountains of restoring Youth; I am sure, I am the onely person, that both can, and have made it good: 'Tis I alone, that have that wonderful Juice, with which *Memnon's* daughter prolong'd the youth of her Grandfather *Tithonus*. I am that *Venus*, by whose favour, *Phaon* became so young again, that *Sappho* fell in love with him: Mine are those Herbs, if yet there be any such; mine those Charms, and mine that Fountain, that not onely restores departed



and Youth, but, which is more desirable, preserves it perpetual : And if ye all subscribe to this Opinion, that nothing is better than Youth, or more execrable than Age, I conceive you cannot but see, how much ye are indebted to me, that have retain'd so great a Good, and shut out so great an evil ; But why do I altogether spend my breath in speaking of Mortals? View Heaven round, and let him that will, reproach me with my name, if he and any one of the Gods, that were not stinking, and contemptible, were he not made acceptable by my Deity : Whence is it that *Bacchus* is always a Stripling, and bushy-hair'd ? Not because he is mad, and drunk, and spends his life in Drinking, Dancing, Revels, and Play-games, not having so much as the least Society with *Pallas* : And lastly, he is so far from desiring to be accounted wise, that he delights to be worshipp'd with Sports and Gambals ; nor is he displeas'd with the Proverb, that gave him the surname of *Fool* ( *Morcho stultior* ) *A greater Fool then Bacchus* ; which name of his was chang'd to *Morychus*, for that sitting before the gates of his Temple, the wanton Countrey people, were wont to bedaub him with new Wine, and Figs : And of scoffs, what not, hath not the ancient Comedies thrown on him ? O foolish God, say they,

C 2

they, and worthy to be born as thou wert, of thy Father's thigh: And yet, who had not rather be thy Fool, and Sot, alwayes merry, ever young, and making sport for other people, than either *Homer's Jupiter*, with his crooked Councels terrible to every one, or old *Pan* with his Hubbubs, or smutty *Vulcan* half cover'd with Cinders, or even *Pallas* her self, so dreadful with her *Gorgon's Head*, and Spear, and a Countenance like Bul-beef: Why is *Cupid* alwayes Pourtrai'd like a Boy, but because he is a very Wagg, and can neither do, nor so much as think of any thing sober? Why *Venus*, ever in her prime, but because of her affinity with me? Witness that colour of her Hair, so resembling my Father, from whence she is call'd (*Venus aurea*) the golden *Venus*: And lastly ever laughing, if ye give any credit to the Poets, or their followers, the Statuaries: What Deity did the *Romans* ever more religiously adore, than that of *Flora*, the foundress of all pleasure? Nay, if ye should but diligently search the lives of the most sower, and morose of the Gods, out of *Homer*, and the rest of the Poets; you would find 'em all but so many pieces of Folly. And to what purpose should I run over any of the other gods tricks, when ye know enough of *Jupiters* loose Loves, when that chaste *Diana*, shall so far forget her

Sexe,

Sexe, as to be ever hunting, and ready to perish for *Endymion*? But I had rather they should hear these things from *Momus*, from whom heretofore, they were wont to have their shares, till in one of their angry humours, they tumbled him, together with *Aie*, Goddess of Mischief, down headlong to the Earth, because his wisdom (forsooth) unseasonably disturb'd their happiness: Nor since that, dares any mortal give him harbour, though I must confess, there wanted little, but that he had been receiv'd into the Courts of Princes, had not my companion Flattery reign'd in chief there, with whom, and t'other, there is no more correspondence, than between Lambs, and Wolves: from whence it is, that the Gods play the fool, with the greater liberty, and more content to themselves (*εὖρον ἄγαντες*) doing all things carelessly, as says Father *Homer*, that is to say, without any one to correct them: For what ridiculous stuff is there, which that stump of the Fig-tree, *Priapus* does not afford 'em? What Tricks and Legerdemains, with which *Mercury* does not cloak his thefts? What buffonry that *Vulcan* is not guilty of, while one while with his polt-foot, another, with his smutcht muzzle, another, with his impertinencies, he makes sport for the rest of the Gods? As also that old Fornicator *Silenus*, with his Countrey-dances,

dances ; *Polyphemus* footing time to his *Cyclops* hammers ; the *Nymphs* with their Jiggs ; and *Satyrs* with their Anticks ; whilst *Pan* makes 'em all twitter, with some bawdy Ballad, which yet they had rather hear, than the Muses themselves, and chiefly when they are well whittled with Nectar : Besides, what should I mention what these Gods do, when they are half drunk. Now by my troth, so foolish, that I my self can hardly refrain laughter : But in these matters 'twere better we remember'd *Harpocrates*, lest some Eves-dropping God or other, take us whispering that, which *Momus* onely, has the priviledge of speaking at length : And therefore, according to *Homers* example, I think it high time to leave the Gods to themselves, and look down a little on the Earth ; wherein likewise, you'll find nothing frolick, or fortunate, that it owes not to me : So provident has that great Parent of Mankind, Nature, been, that there should not be any thing without it's mixture, and, as it were, seasoning of Folly : For since according to the definition of the *Stoicks*, Wisdom is nothing else, than to be govern'd by reason ; and, on the contrary, Folly, to be given up to the will of our Passions ; that the life of man, might not be altogether disconsolate, and hard to away with, of how much more Passion, than Reason, has *Jupiter* compos'd us

put-

sitting in, as one would say (*Semianciam ad*  
*sem*) scarce half an ounce, to a pound: Besides,  
 she has confin'd Reason, to a narrow corner of  
 the brain, and left all the rest of the body, to  
 her Passions: As also, set up against this one,  
 two, as it were masterless Tyrants; Anger,  
 that possesseth the region of the heart, and  
 consequently, the very Fountain of life,  
 the Heart it self; and Lust, that stretcheth its  
 Empire every where; against which double  
 force, how powerful Reason is, let com-  
 mon experience declare; inasmuch as she,  
 which yet is all she can do, may call out to us  
 till she be hoarse again, and tell us the Rules  
 of Honesty, and Vertue, while they, give up  
 the Reins to their Governour, and make a hi-  
 deous clamour, till at last, being wearied, he  
 suffer himself to be carried, whither they  
 please to hurry him: But forasmuch as such,  
 as are born to the business of the world, have  
 some little sprinklings of Reason, more than  
 the rest, yet, that they may the better man-  
 age it, even in this, as well as in other things,  
 they call me to counsel; and I give 'em such,  
 as is worthy of my self, to wit, That they  
 take to 'em a wife; a silly thing (*God wot*)  
 and foolish, yet wanton, and pleasant, by which  
 means, the roughness of the Masculine tem-  
 per, is season'd, and sweeten'd by her folly:

For, in that *Plato* seems to doubt, under which Genus, he should put woman, to wit, that of rational Creatures, or Brutes, he intended no other in it, than to shew the apparent folly of the Sexe ; for, if perhaps any of them goes about, to be thought wiser than the rest, what else does she do, but play the fool twice ; as if a man should ( *Bovem ad ceroma* ) teach a Cow to dance ( *invita, reluctantēque, Minerva* ) a thing quite against the hair : For, as it doubles the crime, if any one should put a disguise upon Nature, or endeavour to bring her to that, she will in no wise bear, according to that Proverb of the Greeks ( *Simia, est simia, etiamsi purpurâ vestiatur* ) An Ape, is an Ape, though clad in Scarlet ; So, a woman, is a woman still, that is to say, foolish, let her put on what ever Vizard she please : But, by the way, I hope that Sexe is not so foolish, as to take offence at this, that I my self, being a woman, and Folly too, have attributed Folly to them ; For if they weigh it right, they needs must acknowledg, that they owe it to Folly, that they are more fortunate than men. As first, their Beauty, which, and that not without cause, they prefer before every thing, since by its means they exercise a Tyranny even upon Tyrants themselves ; otherwise, whence proceeds that sower look, rough skin,

skin, bushy beard, and such other things, as speak plain Old age in a man, but from that Disease of Wisdom? whereas womens Cheeks, are ever plump, and smooth, their Voice small, their Skin soft, as if they imitated a certain kind of perpetual Youth. Again, what greater thing do they wish in their whole lives, than that they may please the Men? For, to what other purpose are all those Dresses, Washes, Baths, Curlings, Slops, Perfumes, and those several little tricks, of setting their Faces, painting their Eye-brows, and smoothing their Skins? And now tell me, what higher Letters of Recommendation have they to men, than this *Folly*? For, what is it, they do not permit 'em to do? and to what other purpose, than that of pleasure? wherein yet, their folly is not the least thing that pleaseth; which how true it is, I think no one will deny, that does but consider with himself, what foolish Discourse, and odd Gambals, pass between a man, and his woman, as oft as he has a mind to be gamesome? And so I have shown ye whence the first and chiefest delight of mans life springs: But there are some, you'll say, and those too, none of the youngest, that have a greater kindness for the Pot, than the Petticoat, and place their



their chiefest pleasure in good fellowship : If there can be any great entertainment, without a woman at it, let others look to't; this I am sure, there was never any pleasant, which *Folly* gave not the relish to : Insomuch, that, if they find no occasion of Laughter, they send for ( γαλατοποιον *quepriam* ) one that may make it, or hire some Buffon flatterer, whose ridiculous discourse, may put by the Gravity of the company : For, to what purpose were it, to clogg our Stomacks with Dainties, Junkets, and the like Stuff; unless our Eyes, and Ears, nay, whole Mind, were likewise entertain'd with Jest, Merriments, and Laughter ? But of these kind of second Courses, I am the onely Cook ; Though yet, those ordinary practises of our Feasts, as choosing a King, throwing Dice, drinking Healths, trouling it Round, dancing the Cushion, and the like, were not invented by the seven Wise Men, but my Self, and that too, for the common pleasure of Mankind ; The nature of all which things is such, that the more of *Folly* they have, the more they conduce to Humane Life, which, if it were unpleasant, did not deserve the name of Life; and other than such, it could not well be, did not these kind of Diversions, take off the



the troublesome impertinence, of our Relations Visits: But perhaps there are some, that neglect this way of pleasure, and rest satisfi'd in the enjoyment of their Friends, calling friendship the most desirable of all things; more necessary, than either air, fire, or water; so delectable, that he that shall take it out of the World, had as good put out the Sun; and lastly, so commendable, if yet that make any thing to the matter, that neither the Philosophers themselves, doubted to reckon it among their chiefest good: But what if I shew you, that I am both (*pror a & puppis*) the beginning and end, of this so great good also? Nor shall I go about to prove it by Fallacies, Sorites, Dilemma's, or other the like subtilties of Logicians, but (*pingui, quod aint Minerva*) after my blunt way, point out the thing as clearly as 'twere with my finger: And now tell me, if to wink, slip over, be blind at, or deceiv'd in, the vices of our friends, nay, to admire, and esteem them for Virtues, be not, at least, the next degree to folly? What is it when one kisses his Mistress freckle Neck, another the Wart on her Nose? When a Father shall swear, his squintey'd Child is more lovely than *Venus*? what is this, I say, but meer folly? And so perhaps you'll cry it is; and yet, 'tis this onely that joyns friends together, and continues them so joyn'd:

I speak of ordinary men, of whom, none are born without their imperfections, and happy he, that is prest with the least; for among wise Princes, there is either no friendship at all, or if there be, 'tis unpleasant, and reserv'd, and that too, but amongst a very few, 'twere a crime to say none: for that the greatest part of mankind are fools, nay, there is not any one, that dotes not in many things, and friendship (you know) is seldom made but amongst equals. And yet, if it should so happen, that there were a mutual good-will between them, it is in no wise firm, nor very long liv'd, that is to say, among such as are morose, and more circumspect than needs, as being Eagle-sighted into his friends faults, but so blear-ey'd to their own, that they take not the least notice of the Wallet that hangs behind their own Shoulders. Since then the nature of Man is such, that there is scarce any one to be found, that is not subject to many errors, add to this, the great diversity of minds and studies, so many slips, oversights, and chances of humane life, and how is it possible, there should be any true friendship between those *Argus's*, so much as one hour, were it not for that, which the Greeks excellently call, *ἑὸς ἑκάς*, and you may render by *Folly*, or *good Nature*, chuse you whether? But what? Is not the Author and Parent of all

our Love, *Cupid*, as blind as a beetle? and as with him (τὰ μὴ καλὰ καλὰ πορεύεται), all colours agree; so from him is it, that every one likes his own Sweetest-kin best, though never so ugly, and (ut cascus cascum, & pupus pupam deammet) that an old man dotes on his old wife, and a boy on his girl; These things, are not onely done every where, but laugh at too, yet, as ridiculous as they are, they make society pleasant, and (as it were) glew it together: And what has been said of Friendship, may more reasonably be presum'd of Matrimony, which in truth, is no other, than an inseparable conjunction of life: Good God! What Divorces, or what not, worse than that, would daily happen, were not the converse between a man and his wife, supported and cherished by flattery, apishness, gentleness, ignorance, dissembling, certain Retainers of mine also: Whoop holiday! how few marriages should we have, if the Husband should but through-examin, how many tricks, his pretty little Mop of Modesty, and Virgin as he believes, has plaid before she was marry'd? And how fewer of them would hold together, did not most of the Wife's actions escape the Husband's knowledg, through his neglect or sottishness? And for this also, ye are beholding to me, by whose means it is, that the Husband is pleasant to his

his Wite, the Wite to her Husband, and the house kept in quiet : A man is laught at, call'd *Cuckow*, *Cuckold*, and I know not what, when seeing the Whore his Wife, weeping, he lick up her tears : But how much happier is it to be thus deceiv'd, than by being troubled with jealousie, not onely to torment himself, but set all things in a hubbub ? In fine, I am so necessary to the making of all society, and manner of life, both delightful, and lasting, that neither would the people long endure their Governors, nor the Servant his Master, nor the Master his Footman, nor the Scholar his Tutor, nor one friend another, nor the Wife her Husband, nor the Userer the Borrower, nor a Souldier his Commander, nor one Companion another, unlesse all of them had their interchangeable failings, one while flattering, other while, prudently conniving, and generally sweetning one another, with some small relish of Folly : And now, you'd think I had said all, but ye shall hear yet greater things : Will he, I pray, love any one that hates himself ? Or ever agree with another, who is not at peace with himself ? Or beget pleasure in another, that is troublesome to himself ? I think no one will say it, that is not more foolish than *Folly* : And yet, if ye should exclude me, there's no man, but would be so far

from enduring another, that he would stink  
in his own nostrils, be nauseated with his own  
actions, and himself become odious to himself;  
as much as Nature, in too many things rather  
Stepdame than a Parent to us, has imprinted  
that evil in men, especially such, as have least  
judgment, that every one repents him, of his  
own condition, and admires that of others;  
Whence it comes to pass: that all her gifts, e-  
legancy, and graces, corrupt and perish: For  
that benefit is Beauty, the greatest blessing of  
Heaven, if it be mixt with affectation? What  
youth, if corrupted with the severity of old  
age? Lastly, What is that in the whole busi-  
ness of a mans life, he can do with any grace  
to himself, or others ( for it is not so much a  
thing of Art, as the very life of every Action,  
that it be done with a good meen ) unless this  
my friend and companion, *Self-love*, be pre-  
sent with it? Nor does she without cause sup-  
ply me the place of a Sister, since her whole en-  
deavours are to act my part every where: For  
what is more foolish, than for a man to study  
nothing else, than how to please himself? To  
make himself the object of his own admiration?  
And yet, what is there that is either delight-  
ful, or taking, nay rather, what not the con-  
trary, that a man does against the hair? Take  
away this Salt of life, and the Orator may  
ev'n

ev'n sit still with his Action ; the Musitian with all his division, will be able to please no man ; the Player be hift off the Stage ; the Poet and all his Muses, ridiculous ; the Painter with his Art, contemptible ; and the Physitian, with his Slip-flops, go a begging : Lastly, thou wilt be taken (*pro Nireo Thersites, pro Phoenix Nestor, pro Minerva sus; for an Ugly fellow, instead of a Beautiful; for Old and Decrepit, instead of Youthful; and, a Beast instead of a Woman; A Child, instead of Eloquent; and instead of a well-bred man, a clown : So necessary a thing it is, that every one flatter himself, and commend himself, to himself, before he can be commended by others : Lastly, Since it is the chiefest point of happiness (Quod sis, esse velis —) that a man is willing to let what he is, you have further abridg'd, in this my Self-love, that no man's asham'd of his own face, no man of his own wit, no man of his own parentage, no man of his own house, no man of his manner of living, nor any man of his own Country ; so that a Highlander has no desire to change with an Italian, a Thracian with an Athenian, nor a Scythian for the fortunate Islands : O the singular care of Nature that in so great a variety of things, has made all equal ! Where she has been sometime sparing of her gifts, she has recompenc'd it with the*

more

more of self-Love; though here I must confess, I speak foolishly, it being the greatest of all other her Gifts: To say nothing, that no great action was ever attempted, without my Motion; or Art, brought to perfection, without my help: Is not War, the very Root, and Matter of all Fam'd Enterprises? And yet, what more foolish than to undertake it, for I know not what trifles; especially, when both parties are sure, to lose more, than they get by the bargain? For of those that are slain (*οὐδ' εἰς λόγος*) not a word of them; And for the rest, when both sides are close engag'd (*— & —* *muco crepuerunt cornua cantu*) and the Trumpets make an ugly noise, what use of those Wise men, I pray, that are so exhaust with study, that their thin, cold Blood, has scarce any spirits left? No, it must be those blunt, dull fellows, that by how much the more they exceed in Courage, fall short in Understanding: Unless perhaps, one had rather chuse *mothes* for a Souldier, who following the example of *Archilochius*, threw away his arms, and betook him to his Heels, ere he had scarce seen his Enemy; as ill a Souldier, as happy an Orator: But Counsel, you'll say, is not of least concern in matters of War. In General, I grant it; but this thing of War-ing, is no part of Philosophy, but manag'd

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by



by Parasites, Pandars, Thieves, Cut-throats, Plow-men, Sots, Spendthrifts, and such other Dregs of Mankind, not Philosophers; who how unapt they are even for common converse, let *Socrates*, whom the Oracle of *Apollon*, though not so wisely, judg'd the wisest of men living, be witness; who stepping up, to speak somewhat, I know not what, in publick was forc'd to come down again, well laugh'd at for his pains: Though yet in this, he was not altogether a fool, that he refus'd the appellation of *Wise*, and returning it back to the Oracle, deliver'd his opinion, That no wise man should abstain, from meddling with publick business; unless perhaps, he should have rather admonish'd us, to beware of *Wisdom*, if we intended to be reckon'd among the number of men; there being nothing but *Ignorance*, that first accus'd, and afterwards sentenc'd him, to the drinking of his poison'd Cup: For while (as ye find him in *Aristophanes*) Philosophizing about Clouds, and Ideas, measuring how far a Flea could leap, and admiring that so small a creature as a Fly should make so great a buzze, he medled not with any thing that concern'd common life. But his Master being in danger of his head, his Scholar *Plato* is at hand, to wit, that famous Patron, that being disturb'd with the noise of

people, could not go through half his  
 Sentence: What should I speak of *Theo-*  
*crastus*, who being about to make an Orati-  
 on, became as dumb, as if he had met a Wolfe  
 in his way, which yet, would have put cou-  
 rage in a Man of War? Or *Isocrates*, that was  
 so cow-hearted, that he durst never attempt it?  
 Or *Tully*, that great Founder of the Roman  
 Eloquence, that could never begin to speak,  
 without an odd kind of trembling, like a Boy,  
 that had got the Hick-cop; which, *Fabius* in-  
 terprets, as an argument of a wise Oratour, and  
 that he that was sensible of what he was doing;  
 while he sayes it, does he not plainly con-  
 fess, that Wisdom is a great obstacle, to the  
 management of business? What would  
 come of 'em, think ye, were they to fight it  
 out at blows, that are so dead through fear,  
 when the Contest is only with empty words?  
 And next to these, is cry'd up, forsooth, that  
 goodly sentence of *Plato's*, *Happy is that Com-*  
*monwealth, where a Philosopher is Prince, or whose*  
*Prince is addicted to Philosophy*; when yet, if ye  
 consult Historians, you'll find no Princes,  
 more pestilent to the Commonwealth, than  
 where the Empire has fall'n, to some smat-  
 ter in Philosophy, or one given to Letters:  
 the truth of which, I think the *Catoes* give  
 sufficient credit; of whom, the one, was ever  
 D 2 disturb-

disturbing the peace of the Commonwealth with his hair-brain'd accusations; the other while he too wisely vindicated its liberty, quickly overthrew it. Add to this, the *Bruti*, *Cassii* nay *Cicero* himself, that was no less pernicious to the Commonwealth of *Rome*, than was *Demosthenes*, to that of *Athens*: Besides, *Antoninus* (that I may give ye one instance that there was once, one good Emperour; for with much ado, I can make it out) was become burthensome, and hated of his Subjects upon no other score, but that he was not great a Philosopher: But admitting him good, he did the Commonwealth, more hurt in leaving behind him, such a Son, as he did than ever he did it good, by his own Government: For these kind of Men, that are so given up to the study of Wisdome, are generally most unfortunate; but chiefly, in their Children; Nature it seems, so providently ordering it, lest this mischief of Wisdome should spread farther among mankind; for which reason, 'tis manifest why *Cicero's* Son was so degenerate, and that wise *Socrates's* Children, as one has well observ'd, were more like their Mother, than their Father, that is to say, Fools: However this were to be born with; if only as to publick Employments they were (*Asini ad lyram*) Like a Sow upon a pipe

of *Organs*, were they any thing apter to dis-  
 charge even the common Offices of Life: Invite  
 a Wise man to a Feast, and he'll spoil the com-  
 munity, either with Morose silence, or trouble-  
 some Disputes: Take him out to Dance, & you'll  
 see him wear (*Camelus saltans*) a Crown you'd have don'd bet-  
 ter: Bring him to the Theatre, and his very looks  
 are enough to spoil all, till, like *Cato*, he take  
 an occasion of withdrawing, rather than put off  
 his supercilious gravity: Let him fall into  
 discourse, and (*Lupus in fabula*) he shall make  
 more sudden stops, than if he had a Woolf be-  
 hind him: Let him buy, or sell, or, in short,  
 meddle about any of those things, without which,  
 there is no living in this world, and you'll say,  
 this piece of Wisdom, were rather a Stock, than  
 a Man; of so little use is he to himself, Coun-  
 try, or Friends; and all because he is wholly  
 ignorant of common things, and lives a course  
 of life, quite different from the people; by  
 which means, 'tis impossible but that he con-  
 tract a popular odium, to wit, by reason of  
 the great diversity of their life, and souls: for,  
 What is there at all done among men, that is  
 not full of Folly, and that too, from fools, and  
 by fools? Against which universal practice, if  
 any single one, shall dare to set up his throat,  
 my advice to him is, that following the exam-  
 ple of *Timon*, he retire into some desert, and

there enjoy, his wisdom to himself : But, to return to my design ; what power was it that drew those stony, oken, and wild people into Cities, but flattery ? for nothing else is signify'd, by *Amphion*, and *Orpheus's* Harp : What was it, that when the common people of Rome were like to have destroy'd all by their Mutiny, reduc'd them to Obedience ? Was it a Philosophical Oration ? Least ; But a ridiculous and childish Fable, of the Belly, and the rest of the Members : And as good success had *Themistocles*, in his, of the Fox, and Hedgehog : What wise mans Oration could ever have done so much with the people, as *Sertorius's* invention of his white Hind ? Or his ridiculous Emblem, of pulling off a Horse's Tail hair, by hair ? Or as *Lycurgus's* his example of his two Whelps ? To say nothing of *Minos*, and *Numa*, both which, rul'd their foolish multitudes, with Fabulous Inventions ; with which kind of Toyes, that great and powerful beast the People, are led any way : Again, what City ever receiv'd *Plato's*, or *Aristotle's* Laws, or *Socrates's* Precepts ? But, on the contrary, what made the *Decii* devote themselves to the Infernal Gods ? Or *Q. Curtius* to leap into the Gulph, but an empty, vain glory, a most bewitching Sirene ; and yet 'tis strange, it should

Should be so condemn'd, By those wise Philo-  
sophers? For what is more foolish, say they,  
than for a Suppliant Suiter to flatter the peo-  
ple, to buy their favour with gifts, to court  
the applauses of so many fools, to please him-  
self with their Acclamations, to be carri'd on  
the peoples shoulders, as in triumph, and  
have a brazen Statue in the Market place?  
Add to this, the adoption of Names, and Sir-  
names; those Divine Honours given to a man of  
no Reputation, and the Deification of the most  
wicked Tyrants, with publicque Ceremonies;  
Most foolish things, and such as one *Democri-  
tus* is too little to laugh at: Who denies it?  
And yet from this root, sprang all the great  
Acts of the *Heroes*, which, the Pens of so ma-  
ny Eloquent men, have extoll'd to the Skies.  
In a word, this *Folly* is that, that lai'd the foun-  
dation of Cities; and by it, Empire, Authori-  
ty, Religion, Policy, and publicque Actions  
are preserv'd; neither is there any thing in  
Humane Life, that is not a kind of part of  
*Folly*. But to speak of Arts, what set mens  
wits on work to invent, and transmit to Poste-  
rity, so many Famous, as they conceive, pieces  
of Learning, but the thirst of Glory? With  
so much loss of sleep, such pains, and travel,  
have the most foolish of men, thought to pur-  
chase themselves, a kind of I know what Fame,

than which, nothing can be more vain; and yet notwithstanding, ye owe this advantage to Folly, and, which is the most delectable of all other, that ye reap the benefit of other men's madness: And now, having vindicated to myself the praise of Fortitude, and Industry, what think ye if I do the same, by that of Prudence? But some will say, You may as well joyn Fire and Water; It may be so: But ye I doubt not but to succeed even in this also, as ye have done hitherto, ye will but favour me with your attention: And first, if Prudence depends upon Experience, to whom is the honour of that name more proper? to the Wise man, who partly out of modesty, and partly distrust of himself, attempts nothing; or to the Fool, whom neither Modesty, which he never had, nor Danger, which he never considers, can discourage from any thing? The Wiseman, has recourse to the Books of the Ancients, and from thence, picks nothing but the subtilties of words; The Fool, in undertaking, and venturing on the business of the world, gathers (if I mistake not) the true Prudence, such as *Homer*, though blind, may be said to have seen, when he said (Πῆχθα γὰρ τὸ βῆμα τὸ καὶ τὸν πόδα) *The burnt child dreads the fire*. For there are two main obstacles to the knowledge of things, Modesty, that casts a mist before



are the understanding, and Fear, that having  
conci'd a danger, dissuades us from the at-  
tempt; But from these, *Folly* sufficiently frees  
us, and few there are, that rightly understand,  
of what great advantage it is, to blush at no-  
thing, and attempt every thing: But if ye  
had rather take Prudence for that, that con-  
sists in the judgment of things; Hear me, I be-  
seech ye, how far they are from it, that yet  
boast of the name: For first, 'tis evident,  
that all Humane things, like *Alcibiades's* (*Sile-  
ni*, or) *rural Gods*, carry a double face, but  
not the least alike; so that, what at first sight,  
seems to be death, if you view it narrowly,  
may prove to be life, and so, the contrary:  
What appears beautiful, may chance to be de-  
form'd; what wealthy, a very begger; what  
infamous, praise-worthy; what learned, a  
dunce; what lusty, feeble; what jocund, sad;  
what noble, base; what lucky, unfortunate;  
what friendly, an enemy; and what healthful,  
noisome: in short, view the inside of these  
*Sileni*, and you'll find them quite other, than  
what they appear; which, if perhaps it shall  
not seem so Philosophically spoken, I'll make  
it plain to you (*Pinguiore Minerva*) after my  
blunt way. Who would not conceive a Prince,  
a great Lord, and abundant in every thing?  
But yet, being so ill furnisht with the gifts of  
the

the mind, and ever thinking, he shall never have enough, he's the poorest of all men: And then, for his mind, so giv'n up to Vice, 'tis a shame how it enslaves him: I might in like manner Philosophy of the rest; But let this one, for examples sake, be enough; yet what this: will some one say? have patience, and I'll shew ye what I drive at: If any one seeing a Player acting his Part on a Stage, should go about to strip him of his disguise, and shew him to the people in his true Native Form, would he not, think ye, not onely spoil the whole design of the Play, but deserve himself to be pelted off with stones, as a Phantastical Fool, and one out of his wits? But nothing more common with them, than such changes. The same person, one while personating a Woman, and another while, a Man; now a Youngster, and by and by, a grim Seignior; now a King, and presently a Peasant; now a God, and in a trice agen, an ordinary Fellow. But to discover this, were to spoil all, it being the onely thing that entertains the Eyes of the Spectators: And what is all this Life but a kind of Comedy, wherein, men walk up and down in one anothers Disguises, and Act their respective Parts, till the property-man brings 'em back to the Tying House: And yet, he often orders a different Dress, and makes

new makes him, that came but juſt now off, in the  
 robes of a King, put on the Raggs of a Beg-  
 ger: Thus are all things represented by Coun-  
 ſel: And yet without this, there were no  
 living: And here, if any wiſe man, as it  
 were, dropt from Heaven, ſhould ſtart up, and  
 ſay, This great thing, whom the World looks  
 upon for a God, and I know not what, is not ſo  
 much as a Man, for that, like a Beaſt, he is  
 ruled by his Paſſions, but the worſt of Slaves,  
 inſomuch as he gives himſelf up willingly to ſo  
 many, and ſuch deteſtable Maſters: Again, if  
 he ſhould bid a man that were bewailing the  
 death of his Father, to laugh, for that he now  
 began to live, by having got an Eſtate, with-  
 out which, Life is but a kind of Death: Or  
 ſhall another, that were boasting of his Family,  
 ſay, I am begotten, or baſe, becauſe he is ſo far re-  
 mov'd from Vertue, that is the only Fountain  
 of Nobility: and ſo of the reſt; what elſe  
 would he get by't, but be thought himſelf  
 mad, and Frantick? for as nothing is more  
 ſolliſh than prepoſterous Wiſdome; ſo no-  
 thing is more unadviſed, than a froward, un-  
 reaſonable Prudence; and ſuch is his, that  
 does not comply with the preſent time (*Es*  
*pro noluit uti*) and order himſelf as the Mar-  
 ket goes, but forgetting that Law of Feaſts  
 (*ἢ πῖδι ἢ ἀπῖδι*) either drink, or legon, un-  
 der-

dertakes to disprove, a common receiv'd Opinion ; whereas, on the contrary, 'tis the part of a truly Prudent man, not to be wise beyond his Condition ; but, either to take notice of what the world does, or run with it for company : But this is foolish you'll say ; nor shall I deny it, provided always ye be civil on t'other side, as to confess, that this is, to Act a Part in that World : But, O ye Gods (*Eloquar an fileam ? — shall I speak or hold my tongue ?*) But why should I be silent in a thing, that is more true, than truth it self. However, it might not be amiss perhaps, in so great an Affair, to call forth the Muses from *Helicon*, since the Poets, so often invoke 'em upon every foolish occasion : Be present therefore awhile, and assist me, ye Daughters of *Jupiter*, while I make it out, that there is no way to that so much Fam'd Wisdome, nor access to that Fortrefs, as they call it, of Happiness but under the Banner of *Folly* : And first, 'tis agreed of all hands, that our passions belong to *Folly* ; inasmuch as we judge a wise Man from a Fool, by this, that the one is order'd by them, the other, by Reason ; and therefore the *Stoicks*, remove from a wise man, all disturbances of Mind, as so many Diseases : But these Passions, do not onely the Office of a Tutor, to such as are making towards the

Opport or Wildome, but a e, in every exercise  
 of Vertue, as it were, Spurs, and Incentives,  
 day, and Encouragers to well doing: which,  
 though that great Stoick *Seneca* most strongly  
 censys, and takes from a wise man, all affecti-  
 ons whatever; yet in doing that, he leaves  
 him not so much as a Man, but rather, a new  
 kind of God, that was never yet, nor ever  
 like to be: Nay, to speak plainer, he sets up  
 a stony Semblance of a Man, void of all Sense  
 and common feeling of Humanity: And much  
 good to them with this Wise Man of theirs,  
 let them enjoy him to themselves, love him  
 without Competitors, and live with him in  
*Plato's* Common-wealth, the Countrey of  
*Idea's*, or *Tantalus's* Orchards: For who would  
 not shun, and startle at such a man, as at some  
 unnatural accident, or Spirit? A man dead to  
 all sense of Nature, and common affections,  
 and no more mov'd with Love, or Pity ( *Quam*  
*dura silex, aut stet Marpesia cantes* ) than  
 if he were a Flint, or Rock; whose censure, no-  
 thing escapes; that commits no errors him-  
 self; but has a Lynx's eyes upon others; mea-  
 sures every thing by an exact Line, and for-  
 gives nothing; pleases himself, with himself  
 onely; the onely Rich, the onely Wise, the  
 onely Free Man, and onely King; in brief, the  
 onely man, that is every thing, but in his  
 own

own single judgment onely; that cares not for the Friendship of any man, being himself a friend to no man; makes no doubt, to make the Gods stoop to him, and condemns, and laughs at the whole Actions of our Life: and yet, such a Beast, is this their perfect Wise Man: But tell me pray, if the thing were to be carri'd by most voices, what City would chuse him for its Governour, or what Army desire him for their General? What Woman would have such a Husband; what Good-fellow, such a Guest; or what Servant, would either wish, or endure such a Master? Nay, who had not rather have one of the middle sort of Fools, who being a Fool himself, may the better know how to command, or obey Fools; and who, though he please his like, 'tis yet the greater number. One that is kind to his Wife, merry among his Friends, a Boon Companion, and easie to be liv'd with, and lastly, one that thinks nothing of Humanity should be a stranger to him: But I am weary of this Wise Man, and therefore I'll proceed to some other advantages. Go to then: Suppose a man in some lofty high Tower, and that he could look round him, as the Poets say, *Jupiter* was now and then wont; To how many misfortunes would he find the life of man subject?

? how miserable, to say no worse, our  
 with, how difficult our Education, to how  
 many wrongs our Childhood expos'd, to  
 at pains, our Youth, how unsupportable  
 Life, Old-age, and grievous, our unavoi-  
 Death? as also, what Troups of Dis-  
 es beset us, how many Casualties hang  
 over our Heads, how many Troubles invade  
 what and how little there is, that is not steep  
 What Gall? to say nothing of those evils one man  
 whangs upon another, as Poverty, Imprison-  
 Servant, Infamy, Dishonesty, Racks, Snares,  
 ch Treachery, Reproaches, Actions, Deceits--  
 e one I'm got into as endless a work as num-  
 ng along the Sands—. For what offences Man-  
 w tould have deserv'd these things, or what  
 ough God compell'd 'em to be born into  
 berth miseries, is not my present business:  
 none it be that shall diligently examine it with  
 ead himself, would he not, think ye, approve the  
 nks, example of the *Milesian* Virgins ( and kill  
 eger, himself ): but who are they, that for no  
 any, other reason, but that they were weary of  
 her, e, have hastned their own Fate? were they  
 nam, the next Neighbours to Wisdom? A-  
 ould, amongst whom, to say nothing of *Diogenes*,  
 iter, *Socrates*, *Cato*, *Cassius*, *Brutus*, that Wise  
 nif- in *Chiron*, being offer'd Immortality, chose  
 ub- her to dye, than be troubled with the  
 Et? same



same thing always : And now I think, ye  
 what would become of the World, if  
 men should be wise ; to wit, 'twere neces-  
 ry we got another kind of Clay, and so  
 better Potter : But I, partly through igno-  
 rance, partly unadvisedness, and sometimes  
 through forgetfulness of evil, do now and then  
 so sprinkle pleasure, with the hopes of good  
 and sweeten men up, in their greatest mis-  
 fortunes, that they are not willing to leave  
 this life, even then, when according to the  
 account of the *Destinys*, this life has left them  
 and by how much the less reason they have  
 to live, by so much the more, they desire  
 so far are they from being sensible of the tedious-  
 wearisomness of life : Of my gift it is, that  
 ye have so many old *Nestors* every where, that  
 have scarce left 'em, so much as the shape of  
 a Man ; Stutterers, Dotards, Toothless, Grey-  
 hair'd, Bald ; or rather to use the words of  
*Aristophanes* ( *ῥυπαῖος, κορὺς, ἀδύς, μω-  
 ραῖος, ρωδὺς, καὶ φαλὺς* ) *Nasty ; Crumpled ;*  
*Miserable, Shrivell'd, Bald, Toothless, and wasting*  
*their Bubbles* : Yet so delighted with life  
 and to be thought young, that one dies his grey  
 hairs ; another, covers his baldness with  
 Periwigg ; another, gets a set of new Teeth  
 another, falls desperately in love with a young  
 Wench, and keeps more flickering about her

an a young man would have been asham'd of:  
 if to see such an old crooked piece, with one  
 not in the grave, to marrie a plump young  
 Wench, and that too, without a portion, and  
 for the use of others, is so common, that men  
 most expect, to be commended for't: But  
 the best sport of all, is, to see our old Women,  
 when dead with age, and such skeletons, one  
 would think they had stoln out of their graves,  
 and ever mumbling in their mouths, (*ὅτι αἰὶν*  
*Life is sweet*; and as old as they are, itill  
 utterwawling, and goatish, to which purpose  
 they spare no cost, to compass some young Stal-  
 ion, daily plaistering their face, scarce ever  
 from the glasse, rubbing up their old Pusse,  
 and showing out their shrivel'd, lank Breasts, coun-  
 terfeiting the tremblings of a young Wench to  
 provoke an appetite, gossipping, dancing, and  
 writing Love-letters: These things are laught  
 as foolish, as indeed they are; yet they please  
 themselves, live merrily, swimme in pleasure,  
 and, in a word, are happy, by my courtesie:  
 that I would have them, to whom these things  
 seem ridiculous, to consider with themselves,  
 whether it be not better to live so pleasant a  
 life, in such kind of follies, than, as the Po-  
 et goes, *To take a Halter and hang themselves*:  
 besides, though these things may be subject  
 to censure, it concerns not my fools in the

E

least,

least, in as much as they take no notice of  
or, if they do, they easily neglect it :  
stone fall upon a mans head, that's evil indeed  
but dishonesty, infamy, villany, ill repute  
carrie no more hurt in them, than a man  
sensible of ; and if a man have no sense  
them, they are no longer evils : What  
thou the worse ( — *Si populus te sibilat,  
tibi plaudas* ) If the people hisse at thee,  
thou applaud thy self? And that a man be  
to do so, he must ow it only to *Folly* : But  
thinks I hear the Philosophers opposing it,  
saying, 'tis a miserable thing for a man to  
foolish, to erre, mistake, and know nothing  
ly : Nay rather, this is to be a man :  
why they should call it miserable, I see  
reason; forasmuch, as we are so born, so be  
so instructed, nay, such is the common con-  
dition of us all ; And nothing can be call'd mi-  
serable, that suits with its kind, unless perhap  
you'll think a man such, because he can neither  
flie with Birds, nor walk on all four with Beasts  
and is not arm'd with Horns, as a Bull : for  
the same reason, he would call the Warlike  
Horse, unfortunate, because he understands  
not Grammar, nor eat Cheef-cakes; and  
Bull miserable, because he'd make so ill  
Wrestler : And therefore, as a Horse that  
has no skill in Grammar, is not miserable;

more is man in this respect, for that they agree  
 with his Nature : But again, the (*Logodadali*)  
*virtuosi*, may say, that there was particularly  
 added to Man, the knowledge of Sciences, by  
 whose help, he might recompence himself in  
 understanding, for what Nature cut him short  
 in other things ; As if this had the least face  
 of truth, that Nature, that was so sollicitously  
 watchful, in the production of Gnats, Herbs,  
 and Flowers, should have so slept, when she  
 made Man, that he should have need, to be  
 kept by Sciences, which, that old Devil  
*Truth*, the evil Genius of mankind, first  
 invented for his Destruction ; and are  
 little conducing to happiness, that they ra-  
 ther obstruct it ; to which purpose, they are  
 properly said, to be first found out, as that  
 the King, in *Plato*, argues, touching the in-  
 vention of Letters : Sciences therefore, crept  
 into the world, with other the pests of man-  
 kind, from the same head, from whence all o-  
 ther mischiefs spring ; wee'l suppose it, Devils,  
 so the name imports, when you call them  
*demons*, that is to say, (*Δαίμονας*) *Knowing* :  
 that simple people of the golden Age, be-  
 ing wholly ignorant, of every thing call'd  
 learning, liv'd only by the guidance, and  
 states of Nature ; for what use of Grammar,  
 where every man spoke the same Language,

and had no further design, than to understand one another? What use of Logick, where there was no bickering, about the double-meaning words? What need of Rhetorick, where there were no Law-suits? Or to what purpose Laws, where there were no ill manners; from which, without doubt, good Laws first came. Besides, they were more religious, than with an impious curiosity, to dive into the secrets of Nature, the dimension of Starrs, the motions, effects, and hidden causes of things; as believing it a crime, for any man to attempt to be wise beyond his condition: And as to the Inquiry of what was beyond Heaven, that madness never came into their heads: But the purity of the golden age, declining by degrees first, as I said before, Arts were invented by the evil *Genii*; and yet but few, and those too receiv'd by fewer: After that, the Chaldean Superstition, and Greek newfangledness, that had little to do, added I know not how many more; meer torments of Wit, and that so great, that even Grammar alone is enough for any man, for his whole life. Though yet amongst these Sciences, those only are in esteem, that come nearest to common sense, that is to say, *Folly*: Divines are but starv'd; Naturalists out of heart; Astrologers laugh'd at, and Logicians slighted; onely the

Physician (*πολλῶν ἀνδράσι καὶ ἄλλων*) is worth all the rest : And amongst them too, the more unlearned, impudent, or unadvised he is, the more he is esteem'd, even among Princes : for Physick, especially as it is now profess'd by most men, is nothing but a branch of Flattery, no less than Rhetorick. Next them, the second place is given to our Law-drivers, if not the first; whose Profession, though I say it myself, most men laugh at, as the Asses of Philosophy; yet there's scarce any business, either so great, or small, but is manag'd by these Asses. These purchase their great Lordships, while in the mean time, the Divine, having run through the whole Body of Divinity, sits gnawing a Raddish, and is in continual Warfare, with Lice, and Fleas : As therefore, those Arts are best, that have the nearest Affinity with Folly; so are they most happy of all others, that have least commerce with Sciences, and follow the guidance of Nature, who is in no wise imperfect, unless perhaps, we endeavor to leap over those bounds, she has appointed to us : Nature hates all false-colouring, and is ever best, where she is least adulterated with Art : Go to then, don't ye find among the several kinds of living Creatures, that they thrive best, that understand no more, than what Nature taught them ? What is more

prosperous, or wonderful than the Bee? And though they have not the same judgement of sense, as other Bodies have; yet, where hath Architecture gone beyond their building of Houses? What Philosopher ever found the like Republick? Whereas the Horse, though he comes so near man in understanding, and is therefore so familiar with him, is also partaker of his misery : for while he thinks it a shame to lose the Race, it often happens, that he cracks his wind; and in the Battel, while he contends for Victory, he's cut down himself, and together with his Rider ( ——— *terram vomorudit* ) lies biting the earth : Not to mention those strong Bits, sharp Spurs, close Stables, Arms, Blows, Rider, and, briefly, all that slavery he willingly submits to, while, imitating those men of Valour, he so eagerly strives to be reveng'd of the Enemy : Than which, how much more, were the life of flies, or birds to be wish'd for, who living by the instinct of Nature, look no further than the present, and yet man, would but let 'em alone in 't : And if at any time, they chance to be taken, and being shut up in Cages, endeavour to imitate our speaking, 'tis strange, how they degenerate from their native gaiety : So much better in every respect, are the works of Nature, than the adueries of Art : In like manner, I can never



And never sufficiently praise, that *Pythagoras* in a  
 dung-hill Cock, who being but one, had been  
 at every thing; a Philosopher, a Man, a Wo-  
 man, a King, a private man, a Fish, a Horse,  
 Frog, and I believe too, a Sponge, and at  
 it concluded, that no Creature, was more  
 miserable than man, for that all other Crea-  
 tures, are content with those bounds, that Na-  
 ture set them, onely Man endeavours to exceed  
 them: And again, among men, he gives the  
 precedency not to the learned, or the great,  
 but the Fool: Nor had that *Gryllus* less wit,  
 than (*πολυμήτις Ὀδυσσεύς*) *Ulysses* with his ma-  
 ny counsels, who chose rather, to lie grunting  
 in a Hog-sty, than be expos'd with t'other, to  
 many hazzards: Nor does *Homer*, that  
 Father of trifles, dissent from me, who  
 not only call'd all men, (*Δειλὰς ἔμμοχθης*)  
*retched and full of calamity*, but often, his great  
 pattern of Wisdom *Ulysses*, (*Δύστρον*) *Mise-*  
*able*; *Paris*, *Ajax*, and *Achilles*, no where;  
 And why I pray? but that, like a cunning fel-  
 low, and one that was his crafts-master, he did  
 nothing, without the advice of *Pallas*; In a  
 word, he was too wise, and by that means, ran  
 wide of Nature: As therefore amongst men,  
 they are least happy, that study Wisdom, as  
 being in this twice-Fools, that when they are  
 born men, they should yet so far forget their

condition, as to affect the life of Gods, and, after the Example of the Gyants, with their Philosophical gimcracks, make a War upon Nature : In which respect, they seem as little miserable as is possible, who come nearest to Beasts, and never attempt any thing beyond Man : Go to then ; let's try, how demonstrable this is, not by *Euthyments*, or the imperfect Syllogisms of the Stoicks, but by plain down-right, and ordinary Examples : And now, by the immortal Gods ! I think nothing more happy, than that generation of men, who commonly call, fools, ideots, lack-wits, and dolts ; splendid Titles too, as I conceive 'em. I'll tell ye a thing, which at first, perhaps may seem foolish, and absurd, yet nothing more true : And first, they are not afraid of death ; no small evil, by *Jupiter* ! They are not tormented with the conscience of evil acts. Not terrify'd with the fables of Ghosts, nor frightened with Spirits and Goblins : They are not distracted, with the fear of evils to come, nor the hopes of future good : In short, they are not disturb'd, with those thousand of cares, to which this life is subject : They are neither modest, nor fearful, nor ambitious, nor envious, nor love they any man ; And lastly, if they should come nearer, even to the very ignorance of Brutes, they could not sin, for so hold the

Divines :

divines : And now, tell me, thou wise fool, with how many troublesome cares thy mind is continually perplext ; heap together all the incommodities of thy life, and then thou'lt be sensible, from how many evils, I have delivered my Fools ; Add to this, that they are not onely merry, play, sing, and laugh themselves, but make mirth where ever they come, a special priviledge, it seems, the Gods have given 'em, to refresh the pensiveness of life : Whence it is, that whereas the world is so differently affected, one towards another, that all men indifferently admit them, as their companions ; desire, feed, cherish, embrace them, make their parts upon all occasions, and permit them, without offence, to do, or say, what they list ; And so little doth every thing desire to hurt them, that even the very Beasts, by a kind of natural instinct of their innocence, no doubt, pass by their injuries : for of them, it may be truly said, that they are consecrate to the Gods, and therefore, and not without cause, do men have 'em in such esteem : Whence is it else, that they are in so great request with Princes, that they can neither eat, nor drink, go any whither, or be an hour without them ? Nay, and in some degree, they prefer these Fools, before their crabbyish Wise-men, whom yet they keep about them, for  
State-

State-sake, Nor do I conceive the reason so difficult, or that it should seem strange, why they are prefer'd before t'others, for that these wise men, speak to Princes about nothing, but grave, serious matters, and trusting to their own parts and learning, do not fear sometimes (*Auriculas teneras mordaci radere vero*) To grate their tender ears, with smart truths; but fools fit 'em with that they most delight in, as jeasts, laughter, abuses of other men, wanton pastimes, and the like: Again, take notice of this no contemptible blessing, which Nature hath giv'n fools, that they are the only plain, honest men, and such as speak truth; And what is more commendable, than truth? for though that Proverb, of *A'cibiades* in *Plato*, attributes Truth to Drunkards, and Children, yet the praise of it, is particularly mine, even from the testimony of *Euripides*, amongst whose other things, there is extant that his honourable saying concerning us (*Μωγεῖ γὰρ μωγὸς λίσυται*) *A fool speaks foolish things*: for whatever a fool has in his heart, he both shews it in his looks, and expresses it in his discourse; While the wise mens, are those two Tongues, which the same *Euripides* mentions, whereof the one, speaks truth, the other, what they judge most seasonable for the occasion: These are they (*— qui nigrum in candida vertunt*) that turn black

... into white, blow hot, and cold with the  
... eath, and carry a far different meaning in  
... ir Breast, from what they feign with their  
... ngue: Yet in the midst of all their prosper-  
... y, Princes, in this respect, seem to me, most  
... fortunate, because, having no one to tell  
... em truth, they are forc't to receive flatter-  
... s for friends: But some one may say, the  
... s of Princes are strangers to truth, and  
... this reason, they avoid those Wise men,  
... ause they fear, lest some one, more frank  
... n the rest, should dare to speak to them,  
... gs rather true, than pleasant; for so the  
... tter is, that they do'n't much care for  
... th: And yet, this is found by experience,  
... ng my Fools, that not onely Truths, but  
... en open reproaches are heard with plea-  
... e; so that the same thing, which if it came  
... m a wise mans mouth, might prove a Capi-  
... Crime, spoken by a Fool, is receiv'd with  
... ight: for Truth, carries with it, a certain  
... cular Power of pleasing, if no Accident  
... d in, to give occasion of offence: which  
... ulty, the Gods have given onely to Fools:  
... d for the same reasons is it, that Women are  
... earnestly delighted with this kind of Men,  
... being more propense by Nature to Plea-  
... e, and Toyes; And whatsoever they may  
... open to do with them, although sometimes,  
... it

it be none of the seriousſt, yet they turn it  
 Jeſt, and Laughter, as that Sexe, was  
 quick-witted, eſpecially, to colour their  
 faults: But to return to the happineſs  
 Fools, who when they have paſt over  
 life, with a great deal of Pleaſantneſs,  
 without ſo much as the leaſt fear, or ſenſe  
 Death, they go ſtraight forth into the Elysian  
 Field, to recreate their Pious, and Careleſſe  
 Souls, with ſuch Sports, as they uſ'd here.  
 Let's proceed then, and compare the condition,  
 of any of your Wiſe Men, with that  
 of this Fool: Fancy to me now, ſome example  
 of Wiſdome, you'd ſet up againſt him; One  
 that had ſpent his Childhood, and Youth,  
 in learning the Sciences, and loſt the ſweeteſt  
 part of his life in Watchings, Cares, Studies  
 and for the remaining part of it, never  
 much as taſted, the leaſt of pleaſure; ever  
 ſparing, poor, ſad, ſowre; unjuſt, and rigorous  
 to himſelf, and troubleſome, and hateful  
 to others; broken with Paleneſs, Leanneſs,  
 Craſineſs, ſore Eyes, and an Old-age, and  
 Death; contracted before their time: Though  
 yet, what matter is it, when he dye, that never  
 liv'd? and ſuch is the Picture of this great  
 Wiſe Man: And here again, ( οἱ ὄντες οὐκ  
 βέλτεροι ) do thoſe Frogs of the *Stoicks*  
 croak at me, and ſay, that nothing is more  
 miſer-

miserable than Madness ; But, *Folly* is the next degree, if not the very thing. For what else is Madness, than for a man to be out of his wits ? But to let 'em see, how they are led out of the way, with the Muses good favour, we'll take this Syllogism in pieces : subtilly argu'd I must confess ; but, as *Socrates* and *Plato* teaches us, how by splitting one *Venus*, and one *Cupid*, to make two of either ; in like manner, should those Logicians have distinguished Madness, from Madness, at least they would be thought, to be well witted themselves : For all Madness is not miserable, or *Horace* had never call'd his poetical fury (*amabilis insania*) a beloved Madness : Nor *Plato*, plac'd the Raptures of Poets, Prophets, and Lovers, amongst the chiefest Blessings of this Life : Nor that *Sybil* in *Virgil*, call'd *Aeneas's* Travels, Mad Labours ; But there are two sorts of Madness, the one, that which the revengeful Furies, send privily from Hell, as often, as they let loose their Snakes, and put into mens breasts, either the desire of War, or an insatiate thirst after Gold, or some dishonest Love, or Parricide, or Incest, or Sacrilege, or the like Plagues ; or when they terrifie some guilty soul, with the Conscience of his Crimes ; The other, but nothing like this, that which comes from me, and



and is of all other things the most desirable. Which happens, as oft as some pleasing doctrine not onely clears the mind of its troublesome cares, but renders it more jocund; And that was that, which, as a special blessing of the Gods, Cicero writing to his friend Atticus wisht to himself, that he might be the less sensible of those miseries, that then hung over the Common-wealth: Nor was that Grecian (*Horace*) much wide of it, who was so far from that he would sit by himself, whole daies in the Theatre, laughing, and clapping his hands, if he had seen some Tragedy acting, where in truth, there was nothing presented; yet in other things, a man well enough; pleasant among his Friends, kind to his Wife, and a good a Master to his Servants (— *signo la non insanire lagenæ*) that if they had broken the Seal of his Bottle, he would not have run mad for't: But at last, when by the care of his Friends, and Physick, he was freed from his Distemper, and become his own man again, he thus expostulates with them (— *Pol, m occidistis, amici, Non servastis, ait, cui sic ex torta voluptas*) Now, by *Pollux*, my Friends ye have rather kill'd, than preserv'd me, thus forcing me from my pleasure: By which you see, he lik'd it so well, that he lost it against his will; And, trust me, I think, they

were

...were the madder o'th' two, and had the greater  
need of Hellebore, that should offer to look  
upon so pleasant a madness, as an evil to be re-  
mov'd by Physick; though yet, I have not deter-  
min'd, whether every Distemper of the Sense  
or Understanding, be to be call'd Madnesse:  
For neither he, that, having weak eyes, should  
take a Mule for an As, nor he, that should ad-  
mire an insipid Poem, as excellent, would be  
presently thought mad; But he, that should not  
want common sense, and fail in his judg-  
ment, and that too, more than ordinary, and  
upon all occasions; he, I must confess, would be  
yet thought to come very near to it: As if any one  
hearing an As's bray, should take it for excel-  
lent musick, or a Begger conceive himself a  
King: And yet this kind of madness, if, as it  
commonly happens, it turn to pleasure, it  
brings a great delight, not onely to them that  
are possess'd with it, but to those also that behold  
it, though perhaps they may not be altogether  
so mad as the other; for the Species of this  
madness, is much larger than the people take  
it to be: for one mad man laughs at another,  
and beget themselves a mutual pleasure: Nor  
does it seldom happen, that he that is the more  
mad, laughs at him that is lesse mad; And  
in this, every man is the more happy,  
in how many respects the more he is mad;  
and,

and, if I were judge in the case, he should  
rang'd in that Classis of *Folly*, that is peculiar  
mine ; which, in troth, is so large, and un-  
versal, that I scarce know, any one in all man-  
kind, that is wise at all hours, or has not some-  
tang or other of madness ; with this differ-  
ence only, that if any one mistake a Woman, for  
Weather-cock, he be, *ipso facto*, pronounce  
mad, because all men see the contrary ; But  
where a man having a Wife, which he holds  
in common with his Neighbours, shall yet  
swear, she's more chaste than *Penelope*, and hug  
himself in his happy mistake, he, by no means  
is to be accounted mad, in as much as it is the  
common case, of most *Husbands* : And in  
this Classis also, do they appertain, that sleight  
every thing, in comparison of hunting ; and  
protest, they take an unimaginable pleasure,  
to hear the yell of the Horns, and the yelps  
of the Hounds, and I believe, could pick some-  
what extraordinary, out of their very excre-  
ment : And then, what pleasure they take  
to see a Buck, or the like, unlac'd ? Let ordi-  
nary fellows cut up an Ox, or a Weather, 'twere  
a crime to have this done, by any thing less  
than a Gentleman ! who with his Hat off, and  
his bare knees, and a Cuttose for that purpose  
(for every Sword, or Knife, is not allowable)  
with a curious superstition, and certain pos-  
sture

res, layes open the severall parts, in their  
pective order, while they that hemm him in,  
mire it with silence, as some new religious  
ceremony, though perhaps they have seen it,  
hundred times before : And if any of 'em  
ance to get the least piece of't, he presently  
nks himself no small Gentleman : In all  
ich, they drive at nothing more, than to  
come Beasts themselves, while yet they ima-  
n, they live the life of Princes : And next  
se, may be reckon'd those, that have such  
itch of Building ; one while changing  
ounds into Squares, and presently again  
adrata rotundis ) Squares into Rounds : never  
owing, either measure, or end, till at last,  
luc'd to the utmost poverty, there remains  
t to them, so much as a place where they  
y lay their head, or wherewith to fill their  
llyes ? And why all this ? But that they may  
s over a few years, in feeding their foolish  
cies : And, in my opinion, next these may  
reckon'd, such, as with their new inventi-  
s, and occult arts, undertake to change the  
ms of things, and hunt all about, after a cer-  
n fifth Essence ; Men so bewicht with this  
esent hope, that it never repents them of their  
ns, or expence ; but are ever contriving,  
w they may cheat themselves, till having  
nt all, there is not enough left them, to

F

provide

provide another furnace: And yet they have not done dreaming these their pleasant Dreams but encourage others, as much as in them lies to the same Happiness: And at last, when they are quite lost, in all their Expectations, they cheer up themselves with this Sentence—(*magnis, vel voluisse sat est*) In great things, the very attempt is enough: and then complain, of the shortness of mans life, that is not sufficient for so great an Undertaking. And then for Gamesters, I am a little doubtful, whether they are to be admitted, into our College; and yet, 'tis a foolish, and ridiculous sight, to see some addicted so to't, that they can no sooner hear the ratling of the Dice, but their heart leaps, and dances again: And then when, time after time, they are so far drawn on with the hopes of winning, that they have made shipwrack of all, and having split their Ship, on that Rock of Dice (*non paucis formidabiliorem Malea*) no less terrible, than the Bishop and's Clerks, scarce got alive to shore, they chuse rather, to cheat any man (of their just Debts) than not pay the money they lost, lest otherwise, forsooth, they be thought no men of their words. Again, what is it, I pray, to see old fellows, and half blind, to play with Spectacles? Nay, and when a justly-deserving Gout, has knotted their Knuckles, to hire a

Caster

Caster, or one that may put the Dice in the Box for them? A pleasant thing I must confess, did it not, for the most part, end in quarrels, and therefore, belongs rather to the Furies, than Me. But there is no doubt, but that, that kind of men, are wholly ours, who love to hear, or tell feign'd Miracles, and strange lies, and are never weary of any Tale, though never so long, so it be of Ghosts, Spirits, Goblins, Devils, or the like; which the farther they are from truth, the more readily they are believ'd, and the more do they tickle their itching ears: And these, serve not only to pass away time, but bring profit, especially, to Masse Priests, and Pardoners: And next to these are they, that have gotten a foolish, but pleasant perswasion, that if they can but see a Wodden or painted Polypheme *Christopher*, they shall not die that day; or do but salute a carv'd-*Barbara*, in the usual set Form, that he shall return safe from Battail; or make his application to *Erasmus*, on certain days, with some small Wax Candles, and proper Prayers, that he shall quickly be rich: Nay, they have gotten an *Hercules*, another *Hippolytus*, and a *St. George*, whose Horse, most religiously set out, with Trappings, and Bosses, there wants little, but they worship; however, they endeavour to make him their friend, by

some Present or other; and to swear by his Masters Brazen Helmet, is an Oath for a Prince: or what should I say of them, that hugg themselves, with their counterfeit Pardons; that have measur'd Purgatory by an Hour-glass, and can, without the least mistake, demonstrate its Ages, Years, Months, Days, Hours, Minutes, and Seconds, as it were in a Mathematical Table? Or what of those who having confidence in certain Magical charms, and short Prayers invented by some pious Impostour, either for his Souls health or profits sake, promise to themselves every thing; Wealth, Honour, Pleasure, Plenty, good Health, long Life, lively Old-age, and the next place to Christ in the other World, which yet they desire may not happen too soon, that is to say, before the pleasures of this life has left them: And now suppose, some Merchant, Souldier, or Judge, out of so many Rapines, parts with some small piece of money; he straight conceives, all that sink of his whole life, quite cleans'd; so many Perjuries, so many Lusts, so many Debaucheries, so many Contentions, so many Murders, so many Deceits, so many breaches of Trust, so many Treacheries bought off, as it were by compact; and so bought off, that they may begin upon a new score: But what is more foolish than



than those, or rather more happy, who daily reciting those seven verses of the Psalms, promise to themselves, more than the top of Felicity: which Magical verses, some Devil or other, a merry one without doubt, but more a Blab of his Tongue than crafty, is believ'd to have discover'd to St. *Bernard*, but not without a Trick; and these are so foolish, that I am half asham'd of 'em my self, and yet they are approv'd, and that not onely by the common people, but even the Professors of Religion. And what, are not they also almost the same where several Countreyes avouch to themselves their peculiar Saint, and as every one of them has his particular gift, so also, his particular Form of Worship? As, one is good for the Tooth-ach; another, for Groaning-women; a third, for Stollen Goods; a fourth, for making a Voyage Prosperous; and a fifth, to cure Sheep of the Rot; & so of the rest, for it would be too tedious to run over all: And some there are, that are good for more things than one; but chiefly, the Virgin Mother, to whom, the common people, do in a manner attribute more, than to the Son: Yet what do they beg of these Saints, but what belongs to *Folly*? To examine it a little: among all those offerings, which are so frequently hung up in Churches, nay up to the very Roof of

some of 'em; did you ever see the least acknowledgment from any one, that had left his *Folly*, or grown a Hairs-breadth the wiser? One scapes a Shipwrack, and gets safe to Shore. Another, run through in a Duel, recovers; Another, while the rest were fighting, ran out of the Field, no less luckily, than valiantly; Another, condemn'd to be hang'd, by the favour of some Saint or other, a friend to Thieves, got off himself by impeaching his fellows; Another escap'd by breaking Prison; Another recover'd from his Feaver in spite of his Physician; Another's poison turning to a loosness, prov'd his Remedy, rather than Death; and that to his Wife's no small sorrow, in that she lost both her labour and her charge: Another's Cart broke, and he sav'd his Horses. Another preserv'd from the fall of a House. Another taken tardy by her Husband, persuades him out of't; All these hang up their Tablets, but no one gives thanks for his recovery from *Folly*; so sweet a thing it is, not to be Wise, that, on the contrary, men rather pray against any thing, than *Folly*: But why do I lanch out into this Ocean of Superstitions?

*(Non mihi si centum linguae sint, oraque centum,*

*Ferrea vox, omnes fatuorum evolvere formas,  
Omnia stultitiæ percurrere nomina possim : )*

Had I an hundred Tongues, as many Mouthes,  
and a Voice never so strong, yet were I not  
able to run over the several sorts of Fools, or  
all the names of Folly; so thick do they swarm  
every where: and yet our Priests, make no  
scruple to receive, and cherish 'em, as proper  
instruments of profit; whereas if some scur-  
vy Wise fellow should step up, and speak  
things as they are; as, To live well, is the way  
to dye well; The best way, to get quit of sin,  
is to add to the money thou giv'st, the Hatred  
of sin, Tears, Watchings, Prayers, Fastings,  
and amendment of life; Such, or such a Saint  
will favour thee, if thou imitatest his life;  
These, I say, and the like, should this Wise  
man chat to the people, from what happiness,  
into how great troubles would he draw 'em?  
Of this Colledge also are they, who in their  
life-time appoint, with what solemnity they'll  
be buried, and particularly set down, how  
many Torches, how many Mourners, how  
many Singers, how many Alms-men they will  
have at it; as if any sense of it could come to  
them, or that it were a shame to them that  
their Corpse were not honourably interr'd;  
so curious are they herein, as if like the *Ædiles*

of old, these were to present some Shews, or Banquet to the people: and though I am in haste, yet I cannot yet pass by them, who though they differ nothing, from the meanest Cocker, yet 'tis scarcely credible, how they flatter themselves with the empty Title of Nobility ; One derives his Pedegree from *Æneas*, another, from *Brutus*, a third, from the Star by the Tail of *Ursa Major* : They shew you on every side, the Statues and Pictures of their Ancestours ; Run over their great Grandfathers, and great great Grandfathers of both Lines, and the Antients Matches of their Families : when themselves yet, are but once remov'd from a Statue, if not worse, than those trifles they boast of ; and yet by means of this pleasant self-love, they live a happy life. Nor are they less Fools, who admire these Beasts, as if they were Gods : But what do I speak of any one or 'tother particular kind of men, as if this self-Love, had not the same effect every where, and render'd most men, superabundantly happy ? As when a fellow, more deform'd than a Baboon, shall believe himself handsomer, than *Homers Nireus* ; Another, as soon as he can draw two or three lines with a Compass, presently think himself an Euclid. A third (*ὅνος πρὸς λύγαν*) that understands Musick no more than my Horse, and for his voice,

(— Qu)

(— *Quo deterius nec  
Ille sonat, quo mordetur Gallina marito.*)

as hoarse as a Dunghil-Cock, shall yet conceive  
himself another *Hermogenes*; But of all mad-  
ness, that's the most pleasant, when a man see-  
ing another, any way excellent, in what he  
pretends to himself, makes his boasts of it, as  
confidently, as if it were his own: And such  
as that rich fellow in *Seneca*, who when ever  
he told a story, had his servants at his elbow,  
to prompt him the names; and to that height  
had they flatter'd him, that he did not questi-  
on but he might venture a rubbers at cuffs, a  
man otherwise so weak, he could scarce stand,  
nely presuming on this, that he had a com-  
pany of sturdy servants about him: Or, to  
that purpose is it, I should mind ye of our  
professors of Arts? Forasmuch as this Self-  
love, is so natural to them all, that they had  
rather part with their Fathers land, than their  
polish Opinions; but chiefly Players, Fid-  
lers, Orators, and Poets, of which, the  
more ignorant each of them is, the more  
insolently he pleases himself, that is to say,  
vaunts, and Spreads out his Plumes:  
And (*inveniunt similes, labra, lactucas*) like  
lips, find like Lettice; nay, the more foolish  
any

any thing is, the more 'tis admir'd, the greater number, being ever tickled, at the worst things, because, as I said before, most men are so subject to folly : And therefore, if the more foolish a man is, the more he pleases himself, and is admir'd by others, to what purpose should he beat his brains, about true knowledge, which first, will cost him dear, and next render him the more troublesome, and less confident, and lastly, please onely a few? And now I consider it, Nature has planted, not onely in particular men, but even in every Nation, and scarce any City is there without it, a kind of common self-love: And hence is it, that the English, besides other things, particularly challenge to themselves, Beauty, Musick, and Feasting ; The Scots, are proud of their Nobility, Alliance to the Crown, and Logical Subtilties ; The French, think themselves the onely well-bred men ; The Parisians, excluding all others, arrogate to themselves the onely knowledg of Divinity ; The *Italians* affirm they are the onely Masters of good Letters, and Eloquence, and flatter themselves on this account, that of all others, they onely, are not barbarous : In which kind of happiness, those of *Rome* claim the first place, still dreaming to themselves of somewhat (I know not what) of old *Rome* : The *Venetians*, fancy them-

themselves happy, in the opinion of their No-  
bility: The *Greeks*, as if they were the onely  
authors of Sciences, swell themselves with  
the Titles of the Ancient *Heroes*: The *Turk*,  
and all that sink of the truly barbarous, chal-  
lenge to themselves the onely glory of Religi-  
on, and laugh at Christians, as superstitious:  
and much more pleasantly the *Jews*, expect to  
this day, the coming of the *Messias*, and so ob-  
stinately contend for their Law of *Moses*:  
the *Spaniards*, give place to none in the repu-  
tation of Souldiery: The *Germans*, pride  
themselves in their Tallness of Stature, and  
skill in Magick: And, not to instance in every  
particular, you see, I conceive, how much  
satisfaction, this Self-love, who has a Sister  
also, not unlike her self, call'd Flattery, be-  
gets every where, for Self-love is no more,  
than the soothing of a mans self, which, done  
to another, is flattery: And though perhaps  
at this day it may be thought infamous, yet it is  
so only with them, that are more taken with  
words than things: They think truth, is in-  
consistent with flattery, but that it is much  
otherwise, we may learn from the examples of  
brute Beasts: What more fawning than a  
Dog? And yet what more trusty? What has  
more of those little tricks, than a Squirrel?  
and yet what more loving to man? Unless  
per-



perhaps you'll say, Men had better converse with fierce Lions, merciless Tigers, and furious Leopards; for that, flattery is the most pernicious of all things, by means of which, some treacherous persons, and mockers, have run the credulous into such mischief. But this of mine, proceeds from a certain gentleness, & uprightness of mind, and comes nearer to Vertue, than it's opposite Austerity, or a Morose and troublesome peevishness, as *Horace* calls it: This supports the dejected, relieves the distressed, encourages the fainting, awakens the stupid, refreshes the sick, suppleth the untractable, joyns loves together, and keeps them so joyn'd: It entices children to take their learning, makes old men frolick, and under the colour of praise, does without offence, both tell Princes their faults, and shew them the way to amend 'em: In short, it makes every man the more jocund, and acceptable to himself, which is the chiefest point of felicity: Ager, What is more friendly than when (*mutuum mu'i se. buunt*) two horses scrub one another? And to say nothing of it, that it's a main part of that fam'd eloquence, the better part of Physick, and the onely thing in Poetry; 'tis the delight and relish of all humane Society. But 'tis a sad thing, they say, to be mistaken: Nay rather he is most miserable, that

at is not so ; for they are quite beside the mark , that place the Happiness of men in things themselves, since it onely depends upon opinion ; for so great is the obscurity , and variety of humane affairs, that nothing can be early known, as it is truly said by our *Academics*, the least insolent of all the *Philosophers* ; or if it could, it would but obstruct the pleasure of life. Lastly, the mind of man is so fram'd, that it is rather taken with false colours, than truth ; of which , if any one has a mind to make the experiment, let him go to Church, and hear Sermons, in which, there be any thing serious deliver'd, the auditory is either asleep, yawning, or weary of it ; but if the Preacher (pardon my mistake, he would have said Declaimer) as too often it happens, fall but into an old Wifes story, they're presently awake, prick up their ears, and gape after it : In like manner, if there be any Poetical Saint, or one of whom there goes more stories than ordinary ; as for example, a *George*, *Christopher*, or a *Barbara*, you shall see him more religiously worshipp'd, than *Peter*, *Paul*, or even Christ himself : But these things are not for this place : And now, at how cheap rate is this happiness purchast ? Forasmuch as to the thing it self, a mans whole endeavour requir'd, be it never so inconsiderable ; But the

the opinion of it, is easily taken up, which yet conduceth as much, or more, to happiness for suppose a man were eating rotten Stockfish, the very smell of which would choak another, and yet believ'd it a dish for the Gods; what difference is there, as to his happiness? Whereas, on the contrary, if another's stomach should turn at a Sturgeon, wherein, I pray, is he happier than t'other? If a man have a crooked ill-favour'd Wife, who yet, in his Eye, may stand in competition with *Venus*, is it not the same, as if she were truly beautiful? Or, seeing an ugly, ill-painted piece, he should admire the work, as believing it some great Master's hand, were he not much happier to think ye, than they, that buy such things at vast rates, and yet perhaps reap, less pleasure from 'em, than t'other? I know one of my Greek name, that gave his new marry'd Wife, some counterfeit Jewels, and, as he was a pleasant Droll, perswaded her, that they were not only right, but of an inestimable price: And what difference, I pray, to her, that was so well pleas'd, and contented with Glass, and kept it as warily, as if 't'ad been a treasure? in the mean time, the Husband sav'd his money, and had this advantage of her folly, that he oblig'd her as much, as if he had bought 'em at a great rate: Or what difference, think ye, be-

tween

## *The praise of Folly.*

ween those in *Plato's* imaginary Cave, that  
and gaping at the Shadows, and Figures of  
things, so they please themselves, and have  
no need to wish; and that Wise Man, who be-  
ing got loose from 'em, sees things, truly as  
they are? whereas that Cobler in *Lucian*, if he  
might always have continu'd, his Golden  
Dreams, he would never have desir'd, any o-  
ther happiness: So then, there is no difference;  
or, if there be, the Fools ha' the 'vantage:  
first, in that their happiness costs them least;  
that is to say, onely some small perswasion:  
Next, that they enjoy it in common; and the  
possession of no good can be delightful with-  
out a companion: for who does not know  
what a dearth there is of Wise men, if yet  
any one be to be found? and though the  
Greeks, for these so many ages, have ac-  
counted upon seaven only; yet, so help me  
*Hercules*, do but examine 'em narrowly, and  
I'll be hang'd if ye find one half-witted fellow,  
say or so much as one quarter of a Wise man,  
amongst 'em all: for whereas, among the ma-  
ny praises of *Bacchus*, they reckon this the  
chief, That he washeth away cares, and that  
too, in an instant, do but sleep off his weak  
spirits, and they come on agen (*albis, ut*  
*vinnt, quadrigis*) as we say, on horseback:  
But how much larger, and more present is  
the

the benent ye receive byme, since, as it were  
 with a perpetual drunkenness, I fill your mind  
 with Mirth, Fancies, and Jollities, and the  
 too, without any trouble? Nor is there any  
 man living, whom I let be without it; where  
 as the gifts of the Gods, are scambled some to  
 one, and some to another: The sprightly de-  
 licious Wine that drives away cares, and leaves  
 such a Flavour behind it, grows not every  
 where; Beauty, the gift of *Venus*, happens to  
 few; And to fewer, gives *Mercury* Eloquence;  
*Hercules* makes not every one rich; *Homers* Ju-  
 piter, bestows not Empire on all men; *Mars*  
 oftentimes favours neither side; Many return  
 sad from *Apollo's* Oracle; *Phæbus* sometimes  
 shoots a Plague amongst us; *Neptune* drowns  
 more than he saves; To say nothing of those  
 (*Vesjoves*, or) mischievous Gods, *Plutoes*, *Ates*, *Pu-*  
 nishments, Favours, and the like, not Gods, but  
 Executioners; I am that only Folly, that so  
 readily, and indifferently bestow my benefits  
 on all; Nor do I look to be entreated, or am  
 I subject to take pett, and require an expiatory  
 sacrifice, if some Ceremony be omitted; Nor  
 do I (—*cælum terris, & mare cælo*) beat heaven &  
 earth together, if when the rest of the Gods  
 are invited, I am past by, or not admitted to  
 the steam of their Sacrifices: For the rest of  
 the Gods, are so curious in this point, that  
 such

ch an omission may chance to spoil a mans  
business, and therefore one had as good ev'n  
t' 'em alone, as worship 'em; Just like some  
men, who are so hard to please, and withall  
ready to do mischief, that 'tis better be a  
danger, than have any familiarity with 'em:  
at no man, you'll say, ever sacrific'd to Folly,  
built me a Temple: And troth, as I said  
before, I cannot but wonder at the ingratitude;  
because I am easie to be entreated, let  
me advise ye better, though truelie, I can  
scarce request it: for why should I require  
Incense, Wafers, a Goat, or Sow, when all  
men, pay me that worship every where, which  
so much approv'd, even by our very Di-  
vines? Unless perhaps I should envy *Diana*,  
that her Sacrifices are mingled with Humane  
good: Then do I conceive my self, most re-  
verentlie worshipp'd, when every where, as  
generally done, men embrace me in their  
hands, express me in their Manners, and re-  
present me in their Lives; which worship of  
Saints, is not so ordinary among Christi-  
ans: How many are there, that burn Candles  
to the Virgin Mother, and that too at noon  
day, when there's no need of 'em? But how  
many are there, that studie to imitate her, in  
simplicity of Life, Humility, and love of Hea-  
venlie things; which is the true worship, and

most acceptable to Heaven? Besides, why should I desire a Temple, when the whole world is my Temple, and, I'm deceiv'd, or 'tis a goodly one? Nor can I want Priests, but in a Land, where there are no men: Nor am I yet so foolish, as to require Statues, or painted Images, which do often obstruct my Worship, since among the stupid, and gross multitude those Figures are worshipt, for the Saints themselves; And so it would fare with me, if it doth with them, that are turn'd out of doors by their Substitutes: No, I have Statues enough, and as many, as there are Men every one bearing my lively Resemblance in his Face, how unwilling so ever he be to the contrary: and therefore there is no reason why I should envie the rest of the Gods, if in particular places they have their particular worship, and that too on set-days; As *Phaëbus* at *Rhodes*; at *Cyprus*, *Venus*; at *Argos*, *Juno*; at *Athens*, *Minerva*; in *Olympus*, *Jupiter*; at *Tarentum*, *Neptune*; and near the *Hellepont*, *Priapus*; as long as the World in general, performs me every day, much better Sacrifices. Wherein notwithstanding, if I shall seem to any one to have spoken more boldlie, than trulie; Let us, if ye please, look a little into the lives of men, and it will easily appear, not onely how much they owe to me, but much



they esteem me, even from the highest, to  
 the lowest: And yet, we will not run over the  
 lives of everie one, for that would be too  
 long; but onelie some few of the great ones,  
 from whence we shall easilie conjecture the  
 rest: For, to what purpose is it to say any  
 thing of the common people, who, without  
 dispute, are whollie mine? for they abound  
 every where, with so many several sorts of  
 folly, and are everie day so busie, in invent-  
 ing new, that a thousand *Democriti* are too  
 few for so general a laughter, though there  
 were another *Democritus* to laugh at them too:  
 'Tis almost incredible what Sport and Pastime,  
 they dailie make the Gods; for, though they  
 set aside their sober, forenoon hours, to dis-  
 patch business, and receive prayers, yet  
 when they begin to be well whittled with *Ne-*  
*bular*, and cannot think of any thing that's se-  
 rious, they get 'em up into some part of  
 heaven, that has better prospect than other,  
 and thence look down upon the actions of  
 men; Nor is there anie thing, that pleases 'em  
 better. Good good! what an excellent sight  
 is? how many several Hurlie-burles of  
 fools? for I my self sometimes sit among  
 those Poetical Gods: Here's one desperate-  
 ly in love with a young Wench, and the  
 more she sleights him, the more outragi-

ouſie, he loves her; Another marries  
womans money, not her ſelf; Another pro-  
ſtitutes his wife; Anothers jealousie keeps  
more eyes on her than *Argos*; Another becomes  
a Mourner, and how fooliſhlie he carries it  
nay, hires others to bear him companie, to  
make it more ridiculous; Another, weeps  
over his Mother in Law's Grave; Another  
ſpends all he can rap and run, on his Bellie  
to be the more hungry after it; Another  
thinks there is no happineſs, but in ſleep  
and idleneſs; Another turmoils himſelf  
about other mens buſineſs, and neglects his  
own; Another, thinks himſelf rich in taking  
up moneys, and changing Securities, as we  
ſay, borrowing of *Peter* to pay *Paul*; and in  
a ſhort time, becomes bankrupt; Another  
ſtarves himſelf, to enrich his Heir; Another  
for a ſmall and incertain gain, expoſes his life  
to the casualties of Seas, and Winds, which  
yet no money can reſtore; Another, had ra-  
ther get Riches by War, than live peaceably  
at home; And ſome there are, that think  
them eaſieſt attain'd, by courting old childleſs  
men with Preſents; And others again, by  
making rich old women believe, they love  
'em; both which, afford the Gods moſt excel-  
lent paſtime, to ſee them cheated by thoſe  
perſons, they thought to have over-catch't. But

the most foolish and basest of all others are our Merchants (to wit, such as venture on every thing, be it never so dishonest, and manage it no better) who though they lie by no allowance, swear and forswear, steal, cozen, and cheat, yet shuffle themselves into the first rank, and all because they have Gold Rings on their Fingers: Nor are they without their flattering Friends that admire them, and give 'em openly the title of Honourable, in hopes no doubt, to get some small snip of 't themselves: There are also a kind of *Pythagoreans*, with whom all things are so common, that if they get any thing under their Cloaks, they make no more scruple of carrying it away, than if 'twere their own by inheritance: There are others too, that are onely rich in conceit, and while they fancie to themselves pleasant dreams, conceive that enough to make them happy: Some desire to be accounted wealthy abroad, and are yet ready to starve at home: One makes what haste he can to set all going, and another rakes it together by right or wrong: This man is ever labouring for publick honours, and another lies sleeping in a Chimney-corner: A great many undertake endless Suites; and outvie one another, who shall most enrich the Delatory Judge, or Corrupt Advocate: One is all for Innovations; and another for some great-be-

knows-not-what ; Another leaves his Wife and Children at home, and goes to *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, or in Pilgrimage to *St. James's*, where he has no business : In short, if a man, like *Menippus*, of old, could look down from the Moon, and behold those innumerable ruffings of Mankind, he would think he saw a swarm of Flies, and Gnats, quarrelling among themselves, fighting, laying Traps for one another, snatching, playing, wantoning, growing up, falling, and dying : Nor is it to be believ'd, what stir, what broils this little creature raiseth, and yet in how short a time, it comes to nothing its self ; while sometimes War, other-times Pestilence sweeps off many thousands of 'em together : But let me be most foolish my self, and one whom *Democritus* may not only laugh at, but flout, if I go one foot further, in the discovery of the Follies, and Madnesse of the common people : I'll betake me to them, that carry the reputation of Wise men, and hunt after that golden Bough, as says the Proverb : Amongst whom, the Grammarians hold the first place, a generation of men, than whom nothing would be more miserable, nothing more perplext, nothing more hated of the Gods, did not I allay the troubles of that pittiful Profession, with a certain kind of pleasant madness ; for they are not onely subject

to those (*ῥῆματα κατὰ*) five curses (with which *Homer* begins his *Iliads*) as says the Greek Epigramme, but six hundred; as being ever hunger-starv'd, and slovens in their schools (Schools did I say? Nay, rather *ἑσπέρια*) Cloisters, Bridwells, or Slaughter-houses) grown old among a company of boyes, deaf with their noise, and pin'd away with stench, and nastiness; and yet by my courtesie it is, that they think themselves the most excellent of all men; so greatly do they please themselves, in frightening a company of fearful boyes, with a thundring voice, and big looks; tormenting them with Ferules, Rods, and Whips; and, laying about 'em without fear or wit, imitate the Ass in the Lions skin: In the mean time, all that nastiness seems absolute Spruceness; that Stench, a Perfume; and that miserable slavery, a Kingdom; and such too, as they would not change their Tyrannie, for *Phalaris*, or *Dionysius's* Empire; Nor are they less happy, in that new Opinion they have taken up, of being learned; for whereas most of 'em beat into boys heads, nothing but foolish Toyes, yet, ye good Gods! What *Palemon*, what *Donatus*, do they not scorn in comparison of themselves? And so, I know not by what tricks, they bring it about, that to their boys foolish Mothers, and dolt-headed Fathers,

they pass for such as they fancy themselves. Add to this, that other pleasure of theirs, that if any of 'em happen to find out, who was *Anchise's* Mother; or pick out of some worm-eaten Manuscript, a word not commonly known, as suppose it *Bubsegua*, (for a Cowheard); *Bovinator*, (for a Wrangler); *Manticulator*, (for a Cutpurse); or dig up the ruins of some ancient Monument, with the letters half eaten out, O *Jupiter*! What towtings! What triumphs! What commendations! As if they had conquer'd *Africa*, or taken in *Babylon*: But what of this, when they give up and down their foolish insipid verses, and there wants not others, that admire 'em as much? They believe presently, that *Virgil's* soul is transmigrated into them? But nothing like this, when with mutual complements they praise, admire, and claw one another; whereas, if another do but slip a word, and one more quick-sighted than the rest, discover it by accident, (*Ἡράκλεις!*) O *Hercules*! What uproars, what bickerings, what taunts, what invectives? If I live, let me have the ill will of all the Grammarians: I knew in my time (*πολυτεχνότατον quendam*) one of many Arts, a *Grecian*, a *Latinist*, a *Mathematician*, a *Philosopher*, a *Physitian*, (*ὃς ταῦτα βασιλικόν*) a Man master of 'em all, and sixty years of age, who laying  
by

all the rest, perplext and tormented himself for above twenty years, in the study of Grammar, fully reckoning himself a Prince, he might but live so long, till he could certainly determine, how the Eight parts of Speech were to be distinguish'd, which none of the *Greeks* or *Latines*, had yet fully clear'd; if it were a matter to be decided by the word, if a man made an Adverb of a Conjunction; and for this cause is it, that we have many Grammars, as Grammarians; nay more, forasmuch as my friend *Aldus*, has given above five, not passing by any kind of Grammar, how barbarously, or tediously soever compil'd, which he has not turn'd over, and examin'd; envying every mans attempts in this kind, how foolish so ever, and desperately concern'd, for fear another should forestall him of his glory, and the labours of so many years perish: And now, whether had you rather call this, Madness, or Folly? It is no great matter to me whether, so long as ye confess it is by my means, that a creature, otherwise the most miserable of all others, is rais'd to that height of felicity, that he has no desire to change his condition, with the King of *Persia*: The Poets, I must confess, are not altogether so much beholding to me, though 'tis agreed of all hands, they are of my partie too; because



cause they are a free kind of people, not restrain'd or limited to any thing, and all their studies aim at nothing more, than to tickle the ears of fools, with meer trifles, and ridiculous fables; And yet they are so bold upon that you'll scarce believe, how they not only assure themselves of immortality, and a life like the Gods; but promise it to others too. And to this order, before all others, Self-love and Flattery, are more peculiarly appendant; nor am I worshipt by any sort of men, with more plainness, or greater constancy. And then, for the *Rhetoricians*, though they now and then shuffle and cut with the Philosophers, yet that these two are of my faction also, though many other Arguments might be produc'd, this clearly evinces it, that besides their other trifles, they have written so much, and so equitely of Fooling; And so, who ever he were that writ of the Art of Rhetorick to *Herennius*, he reckons Folly as a species of wit. And *Quintilian*, the Sovereign of this Order, has a Chapter touching Laughter, more precise than an *Iliad*: In fine, they attribute so much to Folly, that what many times cannot be clear'd with the best Arguments, is yet now and then put off with a jest: Unless perhaps you'll say, 'Tis no part of Folly to provoke laughter, and that artificially; Of the

same

me batch also are they that hunt after immortality of Fame, by setting out Books; of whom, though all of 'em are endebted to me, yet in the first place are they, that nothing but daub paper with their empty Toyes; for they that write learnedly, to the understanding of a few scholars, and refuse not to stand the test of a *versus*, or *Lelins*, seem to me, rather to be afflicted, than happy, as persons that are ever tormenting themselves; Adding, Changing, cutting in, Blotting out, Reviling, Reprinting, showing 't to friends (*nonumque prematur annum*) and nine years in correcting, yet never fully satisfied; at so great a rate, do they purchase this vain reward, to wit Praise, and that too, of a very few, with so many watchings, so much sweat, so much vexation, and loss of sleep, the most pretious of all things: Add to this, the waste of health, spoil of complexion, weakness of eyes, or rather blindness, poverty, envie, abstinence from pleasure, overhasty Old-age, untimely death, and the like: so highly does this Wise man value the approbation of one or two blear-ey'd fellows: But how much happier is this my Writer's dotage, who never studies for any thing, but puts in writing what ever he pleases, or what comes first in his head, though it be but his dreams; and all this, with small waste of Paper; as well know-

knowing that the vainer those Trifles are, the higher esteem they will have with the greater number, that is to say, all the fools, and unlearned: And what matter is it, to slight those few learned, if yet they ever read them? Or of what authority will the censure of so few Wise men be, against so great a Cloud of Gainsayers? But they are the wiser, that put out other mens works for their own, and transfer that glory, which others with great pains have obtain'd to themselves; relying on this, that they conceive, though it should so happen, that their theft be never so plainly detected, that yet they should enjoy the pleasure of it for the present: And 'tis worth ones while to consider, how they please themselves when they are applauded by the common people, pointed at in a Croud ( *Ἰσοκρίτης ὁ ἑκείνους* ) This is that excellent person; lie on Book-sellers stalls; and in the top of every Page, have three hard words read, but chiefly Exotick, and next degree to conjuring; which, by the immortal Gods, what are they but meer words? And agen, if ye consider the world, by how few understood? and prais'd, by fewer? for even amongst the unlearned, there are different palates: Or what is it, that their own very names, are often conterfeit? or borrow'd, from some Books of the Antients? When one stiles  
him-

himself *Telemachus*, another *Stelenus*, a third  
*Maertes*, a fourth *Polycrates*, a fifth *Thrasyma-*  
*chus*: So that there is no difference, whether  
they Title their Books, with the Tale of a Tub,  
or according to the Philosophers, by *Alpha*,  
*Beta*: But the most pleasant of all, is to see  
them praise one another, with Reciprocal  
epistles, Verses, and Encomiums; Fools,  
their fellow-Fools; and Dunces, their brother  
Dunces. This, in t'others opinion, is an ab-  
solute *A'cans*; and the other, in his, a very  
*Callimachus*: He, looks upon *Tully*, as nothing  
t'other; and t'other again, pronounces him,  
more learned than *Plato*: And sometimes too,  
they pick out their Antagonist, and think to  
raise themselves a Fame, by writing one a-  
gainst t'other: while (*Scinditur incertum stu-*  
*la in contraria vulgus*) the giddy multitude,  
is so long divided, to whether o'th' two, they  
shall determine the Victory, till each goes off  
conquerour, & as, if he had done some great  
action, fancies himself a Triumph: And  
now Wise Men laugh at these things as fool-  
ish, as indeed they are; who denies it? yet  
in the mean time, such is my kindness to  
them, they live a merry life, and would not  
change, their imaginary Triumphs, no, not  
with the *Scipios*: While, yet those Learned  
men, though they laugh their fill, and reap  
the

the benefit, of t'others Folly, cannot without ingratitude, denie but that even they too are not a little beholding to me themselves. And amongst them, our Advocates challenge the first place, nor is there anie sort of people that please themselves, like them; for while they dailie roul *Sisyphus* his stone, and quote ye a thousand cases, as it were in a breath, no matter how little to the purpose, and heap Glosses upon Glosses, and Opinions on the neck of Opinions, they bring at last to this pass, that that studie of all other, seems the most difficult: Add to these, our Logicians, & Sophisters, a generation of men (*Ære Dodoneo loquacius*) more prattling than an Echo, and the worst of 'em able to out-chat an hundred of the best pick'd Gossips: and yet their condition would be much better, were they onely full of words, and not so given to scolding, that they most obstinatelie hack and hew one another (*De lana caprina*) about a matter of nothing, and make such a sputter about Terms, and Words, till they have quite lost the Sense; and yet they are so happy, in the good opinion of themselves, that as soon as they are furnished with two or three Syllogisms, they dare boldly enter the Lists against any Man, upon any Point; as not doubting, but to run him down

with

with noise, though the Opponent, were another *Stentor* : And next these, come our philosophers, so much reverenc'd for their cur'd Gowns, and Starcht Beards, that they look upon themselves, as the onely Wise Men, and all others, as Shadows ; And yet how pleasantly do they dote, while they frame in their heads, innumerable worlds ; measure out the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, nay and Heaven itself, as it were, with a pair of Compasses ; lay down the Causes of Lightning, Winds, Eclipses, and other the like Inexplicable Matters ; and all this too without the least doubting ? as if they were Nature's Secretaries, or dropt down among us, from the Council of the Gods ; while, in the mean time, Nature laughs at them, and all their blind conjectures : For, that they know nothing, even this is a sufficient Argument, that they do'nt agree amongst themselves, and are so indemonstrable, as to others, touching every particular ; These, though they have not the least degree of knowledge, profess yet, that they have master'd all ; say, though they neither know themselves, nor perceive a Ditch, or Block that lies in their way, for that perhaps, most of them are half blind, or their wits a wooll-gathering ; yet give out, that they have discover'd Idea's, Universalities, separated Forms, first Matters, Quid-

Quiddities, Eccencies, Formalities, and the like stuff; things, so thin, and bodiless; that I believe even *Lyncæus* himself were not able to perceive 'em: But then chiefly, do they disdain ( *prophanum vulgus* ) the unhallow'd Croud, as often as with their Triangles, Quadrangles, Circles, and the like Mathematical Devices, more confounded than a Labyrinth, and Letters dispos'd one against t'other, as it were in Battle-Array, they cast a mist before the eyes of the ignorant. Nor is there wanting of this kind, some that pretend to foretell things by the Stars, and make promises of Miracles beyond all things Southsaying, and are so fortunate, as they meet with people that believe 'em; But perhaps I had better pass over our Divine in silence ( *καὶ ταύτην καταλείβω μὴ κινῆσαι* ) and not stir this Pool, or touch this fair, but unsavoury Plant; as a kind of men that are supercilious beyond comparison, and to that too, implacable; lest setting 'em about my ears, they attaque me by Troops, and force me to a Recantation-Sermon, which, if I refuse, they streight pronounce me an Heretick; for this is the Thunder-bolt, with which they fright those, whom they are resolved not to favour: And truly, though there are few others, that less willingly acknowledge



knowledge, the kindnesſes I have done them,  
yet even theſe two, ſtand faſt bound to me, up-  
on no ordinary accounts; whilſt being hap-  
py in their own Opinion, and, as if they dwelt  
in the third Heaven, they look with Haugh-  
tineſs on all others, as poor creeping things,  
and could almoſt, find in their hearts to pitie  
em: whilſt hedg'd in with ſo many Magiſte-  
rial Definitions, Concluſions, Corollaries,  
Propoſitions Explicit, and Implicit, they a-  
bound with ſo many (Κεκορυθμένοι) ſtaring  
ſolē, that *Vulcan's Net*, cannot hold 'em ſo  
faſt, but they'll ſlip through with their diſtin-  
tions, with which, they ſo eaſily cut all knots  
under, that a Hatcher could not have done  
better; ſo plentiful are they, in their new-  
found Words, and prodigious Terms: Be-  
ſides, whilſt they explicate the moſt hidden My-  
ſteries, according to their own fancie: As,  
how the *VVold* was firſt made; how Original  
in is deriv'd to Poſterity; in what manner,  
how much room, and how long time, Chriſt  
lay in the Virgins *VVomb*; how Accidents  
abſiſt in the Eucharift without their Subject:  
that theſe are common, and threadbare;  
theſe are worthy of our great and illuminated  
Divines, as the world calls 'em! At theſe, if ever  
they fall a thwart 'em, they prick up: As  
whether there was any inſtant of time in the  
generation of the Second Perſon: whether

H

there

there be more than one Filiation in Christ; whether it be a possible Proposition that God the Father hates the Son; or whether it was possible that Christ could have taken upon him the likeness of a Woman, or of the Devil, or of an Ass, or of a Stone, or of a Gourd: and then how that Gourd should have Preach't, wrought Miracles, or been hung on the Cross: And, what *Peter* had Consecrated, if he had administred the Sacrament, at what time, the Body of Christ hung upon the Cross: Or whether at the same time, he might be said to be Man; whether after the Resurrection, there will be any eating and drinking, since we are so much afraid of hunger and thirst in this world: There are infinite of these (*λεπτολογίαι*) subtille Trifles, and others more subtille than these; of Notions, Relations, Instants, Formalities, Quiddities, Ecceities, which no one can perceive without a *Lynx* his eyes, (that could look through a stone-wall) and discover those things through the thickest darkness, that never were: Add to this, those their other Determinations, and those too, so contrary to common Opinion, that those Oracles of the *Stoicks*, which they call Paradoxes, seem in comparison of these but blockish and idle: As, 'tis a lesser crime to kill a thousand men, than to set a stitch on a poor  
man

mans shooe, on the Sabbath-day : And that a man should rather chuse, that the whole world, with all Food and Raiment, as they say, should perish, than tell a lye, though never so inconsiderable : And these most subtile subtilties, are rendred yet more subtile, by the severall Methods, of so many Schoolmen ; that one might sooner wind himself out of a Labyrinth, than the entanglements, of the *Realists*, *Nominalists*, *Thomists*, *Albertists*, *Occamists*, *Scotists* ; nor have I nam'd all the severall Sects, but onely some of the chief ; In all which, there is so much Doctrine, and so much difficultie, that I may well conceive, the Apostles, had they been to deal with these new kind of Divines, had needed to have pray'd in aid, of some other Spirit : *Paul* knew what Faith was, and yet when he saith, *Faith is the Substance of things hop'd for, and the Evidence of things not seen*, he did not define it Doctor-like : And as he understood Charity well himself, so he did as Illogically divide, and define it to others, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Chapter the thirteenth : And devoutly, no doubt, did the Apostles consecrate the Eucharist ; yet, had they been askt the question, touching the *Terminus à quo*, and the *Terminus ad quem*, of Transubstantiation ; of the manner how, the same body, can be in

several places, at one and the same time; of the difference the body of Christ has in Heaven, from that of the Cross, or this in the Sacrament; In what punct of time Transubstantiation is, whereas Prayer, by means of which it is, as being a discrete quantity, is transient; they would not, I conceive, have answer'd with the same subtilty, as the *Scotists* Dispute, and Define it: They knew the Mother of *Jesus*, but which of them has so Philosophically demonstrated, how she was preserv'd from Origināl sin, as have done our Divines? *Peter* receiv'd the Keyes, and from him too, that would not have trusted them with a person unworthy; yet whether he had understanding, or no, I know not: for certainly he never attain'd, to that subtilty to determine, how he could have the Key of knowledge, that had no knowledge himself. They Baptized far and near, and yet taught no where, what was the Formal, Material, Efficient, and final cause of Baptisme; nor made the least mention, of delible, and indelible Characters: They worshipt 'tis true, but in Spirit, following herein, no other, than that of the Gospel, *God is a Spirit, and they that worship, must worship him in Spirit, and Truth*; yet it does not appear, it was at that time reveal'd to them, that an Image

sketcht

sketcht on the Wall, with a Cole, was to be worshipt, with the same worship, as Christ himself; if at least, the two 'fore fingers be stretcht out, the hair, long, and uncut, and have three Rayes about the Crown of the Head: For who can conceive these things, unless he has spent, at least six and thirty years in the Philosophical, and Supercœlestial Whims of Aristotle, and the Schoolmen? In like manner, the Apostles press to us Grace, but which of them distinguisheth between (*gratiam gratis datam, & gratiam gratificantem*) free grace, and grace that makes a man acceptable; They exhort us to good works, and yet, determine not (*opus operans, & opus operatum*) what is the work working, and what, a resting in the work done: They incite us to Charity, and yet make no difference, between (*infusam & acquisitam*) Charity infus'd, and Charity wrought in us by our own endeavours: nor do they declare, whether it be an Accident, or Substance, a thing Created, or Uncreated: They detest, and abominate sin, but, let me not live, if they could define according to art, what that is, which we call Sin, unless perhaps they were inspir'd, by the spirit of the prophets: Nor can I be brought to believe, that any, by whose learning you may judge the rest, could have so often condemn'd, Questions,

Disputes, Genealogies, and, as himself calls 'em ( *λογομαχίας* ) Strifes of words, if he had thoroughly understood those subtilties, especially, when all the Debates, and Controversies of those times, were rude and blockish, in comparison of the more than *Chrysippean* subtilties of our Masters ; Although yet, the Gentlemen are so modest, that if they meet with any thing written by the Apostles, not so smooth and even as might be expected from a Master, they do not presently condemn it, but handsomly bend it to their own purpose ; so great Respect and Honour do they give, partly to Antiquity, and partly to the name of *Apostle* : And truly, 'twere a kind of injustice, to require so great things of them, that never heard the least word from their Masters, concerning it : And so if the like happen in *Chrysostome*, *Basil*, *Ferome*, they think it enough to say, They are not oblig'd by't : The Apostles also, confuted the Heathen Philosophers, and Jews, a people, than whom, none more obstinate ; but rather, by their good Lives, and Miracles, than Syllogisms : and yet there was scarce one amongst 'em, that was capable of understanding, the least *Quodlibet* of the *Scotists* : But now where is that Heathen, or Heretick, that must not presently stoop to such Wire-drawn subtilties, unless

be so thick-skul'd, that he can't apprehend  
em, or so impudent as to hiss 'em down, or  
being furnisht with the same Tricks, be able  
to make his party good with 'em? as if a man  
should set a Conjuror on work, against a Conju-  
er, or fight with one hallowed Sword against  
another, which would prove no other, than  
(*Penelopes tela*) a work to no purpose: for my  
own part, I conceive the Christians would do  
much better, if instead of those dull Troops,  
and Companies of Souldiers, with which they  
have manag'd their War, with such doubtful  
success, they would send the bauling *Scotists*,  
the most obstinate *Occamists*, and invincible  
*Albertists*, to war against the *Turks* and *Sara-  
ens*; and they would see, I guess, a most plea-  
sant Combate, and such a Victory, as was ne-  
ver before: For who is so faint, whom their  
devices will not enliven? Who so stupid, whom  
such spurrs can't quicken? or who so quick-  
sighted, before whose eyes they can't cast a  
mist? But you'll say, I jest; Nor are ye with-  
out cause, since even amongst Divines them-  
selves, there are some that have learnt better,  
and are ready to turn their stomacks, at those  
foolish subtilties of t'others: There are some  
that detest 'em, as a kind of Sacriledge, and  
count it the height of Impiety, to speak so ir-  
reverently of such hidden things, rather to



be ador'd, than explicated ; to dispute of 'em with such profane, and Heathenish niceties ; to define 'em, so arrogantly, and pollute the majestie of Divinity, with such pithless, and fordid terms, and opinions : Mean time, the others please, nay hug themselves in their happiness, and are so taken up with these pleasant trifles, that they have not so much leisure, as to cast the least eye on the Gospel, or *St Paul's* Epistles ; And while they play the fool at this rate in their Schools, they make account the Universal Church, would otherwise perish, unless, as the Poets fancy'd of *Atlas*, that he supported Heaven with his shoulders, they underpropt t'other, with their Syllogistical Buttresses : And how great a happiness is this, think ye ? while, as if holy Writ were a Nose of Wax, they fashion, and refashion it, according to their pleasure ; while they require, that their own Conclusion, subscribed by two or three Schoolmen, be accounted greater, than *Solon's* Laws, and prefer'd, before the Papal Decretals ; while, as Censors of the world, they force every one to a Recantation, that differs but a hairs breadth from the least of their Explicit, or Implicit Determinations ; and those too, they pronounce like Oracles, This Proposition is scandalous ; This, Irreverent ; This, has a smatch

of Heresie; This, no very good sound: so  
that neither Baptisme, nor the Gospel, nor  
Paul, nor Peter, nor St. Jerome, nor St. Augu-  
stine, nor nor (Ἀριστοτελικώτατος ipse Thomas)  
most Aristotelitotical Thomas himself can make  
a man a Christian, without these Batchelours  
too, be pleas'd to give him his grace: And the like  
of their subtilty in judging; for who would  
think he were no Christian, that should say  
these two Speeches, *Matula Putes, & matula*  
*Putet, or Ollæ fervere, & ollam fervire,* were  
not both good Latine, unless their wisdomes  
had taught us the contrary? who had deliver'd  
the Church, from such Mists of Errour, which  
yet, no one e're met with, had they not come  
out, with some Univer-sity Seal for't? And are  
they not most happy, while they do these  
things? Then, for what concerns Hell, how  
exactly they describe every thing, as if they  
had been conversant in that Common-wealth,  
most part of their time? Again, how do they  
frame in their fancy new Orbes, adding to  
those we have already, an eighth; a goodly  
one no doubt, and spacious enough, lest per-  
haps their happy Souls might lack room to  
walk in, entertain their friends, and now and  
then, play at Foot-ball? And with these, and  
a thousand the like fopperies, their heads are  
so full stuff, and stretcht, that I believe *Jupi-*  
*ters*

ters brain, was not near so bigg, when, being in labour with *Pallas*, he was beholding to the Midwifery of *Vulcan's* Axe: And therefore ye must not wonder, if in their publique Disputes, they are so bound about the head, lest otherwise perhaps, their brains might leap out: Nay, I have sometimes laught myself, to see 'em so towre in their own opinion, when they speak most barbarously; and when they Humh and Hawh so pitifully, that none but one of their own Tribe can understand 'em, they call it heights, which the Vulgar can't reach: for they say, 'tis beneath the dignity, of Divine Mysteries, to be cramped, and ty'd up, to the narrow Rules of Grammarians: from whence we may conjecture, the great Prerogative of Divines, if they onely have the priviledge, of speaking corruptly, in which yet, every Cobler thinks himself concern'd, for his share: Lastly, they look upon themselves, as somewhat more than Men, as often as they are devoutly saluted by the name of, Our Masters; in which, they fancy there lyes as much, as in the *Jews* (τετραγύμνατοι) *Jehovah*; And therefore, they reckon it a crime, if *Magister noster*, be written other, than in Capital Letters; and if any one, should preposterously say, *Nster magister*, he has at once everturnd the whole body of Divinity. And next these, come those, that commonly call

all themselves the Religious, and Monks ; most  
life in both Titles, when both, a great part  
of 'em , are farthest from Religion, and no  
men swarm thicker in all places than them-  
selves : Nor can I think of any thing, that  
could be more miserable, did not I support  
em so many several wayes : for whereas all  
men detest 'em to that height, that they take  
for ill luck, to meet one of 'em by chance,  
yet, such is their happiness, that they flatter  
themselves : for first, they reckon it one of  
the main Points of Piety, if they are so illite-  
rate, that they can't so much as read : And  
then, when they run over their Offices, which  
they carry about 'em, rather by tale, than un-  
derstanding, they believe the Gods, more  
then ordinarily pleas'd , with their braying:  
And some there are among 'em, that put off  
their trumperies at vast rates, yet roave up and  
down , for the bread they eat ; nay there is  
scarce an Inne, Waggon, or Ship, into which  
they intrude not, to the no small damage, of  
the Common-wealth of Beggars : And yet,  
like pleasant fellows, with all this Vileness,  
Ignorance , Rudeness , and Impudence, they  
represent to us ( for so they call it ) the lives  
of the Apostles ; yet what is more pleasant,  
than that they do all things by Rule , and as it  
were, a kind of Mathematicks, the least swer-  
ving

ving from which, were a crime beyond forgiveness; As, how many knots their shoes must be ti'd with, of what colour every thing is, what distinction of habits, of what stuff made, how many straws broad their Girdles, and of what fashion, how many bushels wide their Cowle, how many fingers long their Hair, and how many hours sleep; which exact equality, how disproportionable it is, among such variety of bodies and tempers, Who is there that does not perceive it? And yet by reason of these fooleries, they not onely set slight by others, but each different Order; men otherwise professing Apostolical Charity, despise one another, and for the different wearing of a habit, or that 'tis of darker colour, they put all things in combustion: And amongst these, there are some so rigidly Religious, that their upper Garment is hair-Cloth, their inner of the finest Linnen; and on the contrary, others wear Linnen without, and hair next their skins: Others again, are as affraid to touch money, as poyson; and yet neither forbear Wine, nor dallying with Women: In a word, 'tis their onely care, that none of 'em come near one another in their manner of living, nor do they endeavour, how they may be like Christ, but how they may differ among themselves. And another great happiness they conceive in their Names, while

while they call themselves *Cordeliers*, and among  
these too, some are *Colletes*, some *Mnirs*, some  
*Minims*, some *Crossed*: And agen, these are  
*Medictines*, those *Bernardines*; these *Carmelites*,  
those *Augustines*; these *Williamites*, and those  
*Colines*; as if it were not worth the while,  
to be call'd Christians: And of these, a great  
part build so much on their Ceremonies, and  
pretty Traditions of Men, that they think one  
Heaven is too poor a reward for so great merit;  
little dreaming, that the time will come, when  
Christ not regarding any of these trifles, will  
call 'em to account for his precept of Charity:  
One shall shew ye a large Trough, full of all  
kinds of Fish; another tumble ye out so many  
shells of Prayers; another reckon ye so ma-  
ny myriads of Fasts, and fetch 'em up agen in  
the dinner, by eating till he cracks agen;  
another produces more bundles of Ceremo-  
nies, than seven of the stoutest Ships would be  
able to carry; another brags, he has not toucht  
penny these threescore Years, without two  
pair of Gloves at least, upon his hands; Ano-  
ther wears a Cowl, so lin'd with grease, that  
the poorest Tarpaulin would not stoop to take  
it up; Another will tell ye, he has liv'd these  
fifty five Years like a Sponge, continually fast-  
ed to the same place; another is grown hoarse  
with his daily chanting; another has contra-  
cted

cted a Lethargy, by his solitary living ; and another, the Palsie in his Tongue, for want of speaking : But Christ, interrupting them in their vanities, which otherwise were endless, will ask 'em, Whence this new kind of Jewry ? I acknowledge one Commandment, which is truly mine, of which alone I hear nothing. I promise, 'tis true, my Fathers heritage, and that without Parables, not to Cows, odd Prayers and Fastings, but to the duties of Faith and Charity ; Nor can I acknowledge them that least acknowledg their faults ; They that would seem holier than my self, let 'em if they list, possess to themselves (*Abraxastorum calculus*) those three hundred sixty five Heavens of *Beelzebub* the Heretick's invention, or command them, whose foolish Traditions they have preferred, before my Precepts, to erect them a new one : When they shall hear these things, and see common ordinary persons preferred before 'em, with what countenance, think ye, will they behold one another ? In the mean time, they are happy in their hopes, and for this also, they are beholding to me : And yet these kind of people, though they are, as it were, of another Common-wealth, no man dares despise, especially those begging Friars, because they are privie to all mens secrets, by means of Confessions, as they call 'em : Which yet, were

less than treason to discover, unless being  
 drunk, they have a mind to be pleasant,  
 and then all comes out, that is to say, by hints  
 and conjectures, but suppressing the names:  
 if any one should anger these Wasps, they'll  
 sufficiently revenge themselves in their pub-  
 lic Sermons; and so point out their enemy,  
 by circumlocutions, that there's no one but un-  
 derstands whom 'tis they mean, unless he un-  
 derstand nothing at all; nor will they give  
 over their barking (*quem in os offam obje-*  
*ciunt*) till you throw the Dogs a bone: And  
 now tell me, what Jugler, or Mountebank  
 you had rather behold, than hear them rheto-  
 rically play the fool in their Preachments, and  
 most sweetly imitating, what Rhetoricians  
 have written, touching the Art of good speak-  
 ing: Good God! What several postures they  
 take, how they shift their voice, sing out their  
 words; skip up and down, and are ever and  
 anon making such new faces, that they con-  
 found all things with noise! And yet, this  
 knack of theirs, is no less than a Mystery, that  
 passes in succession from one brother to another;  
 which, though it be not lawful for me to know,  
 however, I'll venture at it by conjectures: And  
 first, they invoke what ever they have scrapt  
 from the Poets. And in the next place, if they are  
 of discourse of Charity, they take their rise  
 from



from the River *Nilus*; or to set out the Mystery of the Cross, from *Bell* and the Dragon; or to dispute of Fasting, from the twelve signs of the *Zodiack*; or being to preach of Faith, ground their matter on the square of a Circle. I have heard my self one, and he no small fool (I was mistaken, I would have said Scholar) that being, in a Famous Assembly, explaining the Mystery of the Trinity, that he might both let 'em see, his Learning was not ordinary, and withal satisfy, some Theological ears, he took a new way, to wit, from the Letters, Syllables, and the Word it self; then from the Cohærence of the Nominative Case and the Verb; and the Adjective and Substantive; and while most of the Auditory wonder'd, and some of 'em mutter'd that of *Horace* (*Quis sum hæc tam putida tendunt?*) what does this Trumpery drive at? At last, he brought the matter to this head, that he would demonstrate, that the Mystery of the Trinity was so clearly exprest, in the very Rudiments of Grammar, that the best Mathematician could not chalkt 't out more plainly; And in this Discourse, did (*θεολογώτατος* & *ille*) this most Superlative Theologue, beat his brains, for eight whole moneths, that at this hour, he was as blind as a Beetle; to wit, all the sight of his eyes, being run into the sharpness of his wit.

and belides him, I met with another, some  
eighty years of age, and such a Divine, that  
you'd have sworn, *Scotus* himself was reviv'd  
in him: He being upon the point, of unfold-  
ing the Mystery of the name Jesus, did with  
wonderful subtilty demonstrate, that there lay  
hidden in those Letters, what ever could be  
said of him: for, that it was only declin'd with  
three Cases, he said, it was a manifest token of  
the Divine Trinity; and then, that the first  
ended in *S*. the second in *M*. the third in *U*.  
there was in it ( *ὀψήριον* ) an ineffable My-  
stery; to wit, those three Letters declaring to us  
that he was ( *Summum, Medium, & Ultimum* )  
the Beginning, Middle, and End of all: Nay  
the Mystery was yet more abstruse; for he so  
mathematically split, the word Jesus, into  
three equal parts, that he left the middle let-  
ter by it self, and then told us, that that let-  
ter in Hebrew was ( *ש* ) *Schin*, or *Sin*, and  
that *Sin*, in the *Scotch* tongue, as he remem-  
ber'd, signifi'd as much as Sin; from whence  
he gather'd, that it was Jesus that took away  
the sins of the world; At which new Exposi-  
tion, the Auditory were so wonderfully in-  
terest, and struck with admiration, especially  
the Theologues, that there wanted little, but  
that, *Niobe*-like, they had been turn'd to  
stones; whereas, the like had almost happen'd

to me, as befell the *Priapus* in *Horace*, who having discover'd a couple of Witches, and their midnight tricks, let a crack backwards, and frighted 'em away : And not without cause, for when were the *Grecian Demosthenes*, or *Roman Cicero*, e're guilty of the like ; They thought that Introduction faulty, that was wide of the Matter ; as if it were not the way of Carters, and Swinheards, that have no more wit, than God sent 'em : But these learned men, think their Preamble ( for so they call it ) then chiefly Rhetorical, when it has least Coherence with the rest of the Argument, that the admiring Auditory may in the mean while whisper to themselves ( *Quo nunc se proripit ille ?* ) What will he be at now ? In the third place, they bring in, instead of Narration, some Texts of Scripture, but handle 'em, cursorily, and as it were by the bye, when yet it is the onely thing they should have insisted on : And fourthly, as it were changing a Part in the Play, they bolt out with some question in Divinity, and many times ( οὗτοι γὰρ ἄνθρωποι ἀνθρώπων ) relating, neither to Earth, nor Heaven ; And this they look upon us, as a piece of Art. Here they erect their Theological Crests, and beat into the peoples ears, those Magnifical Titles, of Illustrious Doctors, Subtile Doctors, most Subtile Doctors,

Flors, Seraphick Doctors, Cherubin-Doctors, Holy Doctors, Unquestionable Doctors, and the like; And then throw abroad among the ignorant people, Syllogisms, Majors, Minors, Conclusions, Corollaries, Suppositions, and those, so weak and foolish, that they are below Pedantry: There remains yet the fifth Act, in which, one would think, they should shew their Mastery: And here, they bring in some foolish insipid Fable, out of *Speculum Historiale*, or *Gesta Romanorum*, and Expound it Allegorically, Tropologically, and Anagogically: And after this manner, do they end their Chimæra, and such, as *Horace* despair'd of compassing, when he writ, *Humano capiti*, &c. But they have heard, from some body, I know not whom, that the beginning of a speech should be Sober, and Grave, and least given to noise; And therefore, they begin theirs, at that rate, they can scarce hear themselves, as if it were no matter, whether any one understood 'em: They have learnt some where, that to move the affections, a lowder voice is requisite; VVhereupon, they that otherwise, would speak like a Mouse in a Cheese, start out of a suddain, into a downright fury, even there too, where there's the least need of it: A man would swear, they were past the power of *Hellebor* so little do

they consider, where 'tis they run out: Again because they have heard, that as a Speech comes up to something, a man should press it more earnestly; they, how ever they begin, use a strange contention of voice in every part, though the Matter it self be never so flat, and end in that manner, as if they'd run themselves out of breath: Lastly, they have learnt, that among Rhetoricians, there is some mention of Laughter, and therefore, they stand ready to prick in a jest, here and there; but, O *Venus*! so void of wit, and so little to the purpose, that it may be truly call'd ( ὄνον πηλὴν λυγρὴν ) an Asses playing on the Harp. And sometimes also, they use somewhat of a fluting, but so nevertheless, that they rather tickle, than wound; nor do they ever more truly flatter, than when they would seem ( παρρησιαζέσθαι ) to use the greatest freedom of speech: Lastly, such is their whole action, that a man would swear they had learnt it, from our common Tumblers, though yet they come short of 'em in every respect: However, they are both so like, that no man will dispute, but that, either these, learnt their Rhetorick from them, or they, theirs, from these: And yet, they light on some, that when they hear 'em, conceive they hear, very Demosthenes, and Ciceroes: of which sort chiefly,

are

are our Merchants, and Women, whole Ears  
 onely, they endeavour to please, because, as  
 to the first, if they stroake 'em handsomely,  
 some part or other of their ill-gotten goods is  
 wont to fall to their share: and the Women,  
 though for many other things they favour  
 this Order, this is not the least, that they  
 commit to their breasts, what ever discontents,  
 they have against their Husbands: And now,  
 I conceive me, ye see, how much this kind of  
 people are beholding to me, that with their  
 Petty Ceremonies, Ridiculous Trifles, and  
 Noise, exercise a kind of Tyranny, among  
 mankind, believing themselves very *Pauls*, and  
*Antonies*: But I willingly give over these  
 Stage-players, that are such ingrateful dis-  
 semblers of the courtesies I have done 'em,  
 and such impudent pretenders to Religion,  
 which they ha' n't. And now I have a mind,  
 to give some small touches, of Princes, and  
 Courts, of whom I am had in reverence, above-  
 board, and as it becomes Gentlemen, frank-  
 ly: and truly, if they had the least proportion  
 of sound judgment, what life were more un-  
 pleasant than theirs, or so much to be avoided?  
 For who ever did but truly weigh with himself,  
 how great a burthen lies upon his shoulders,  
 that would truly discharge the duty of a Prince,  
 he would not think it worth his while, to make

his way to a Crown, by Perjury, and Parricide: He would consider, that he that takes a Scepter in his hand, should manage the Publick, not his Private Interest; study nothing, but the common good, and not, in the least, go contrary to those Laws, whereof himself is both the Author, and Exactor: That he is to take an account of the good or evil administration, of all his magistrates and subordinate Officers: That though he is but one, all mens Eyes are upon him, and in his power it is, either like a good Planet to give life and safety to mankind, by his harmless influence, or like a fatal Comet, to send mischief and destruction: That the vices of other men, are not alike felt, nor so generally communicated; And that a Prince stands in that place, that his least deviation, from the Rule of Honesty, and Honour, reaches farther than himself, and opens a gap, to many mens ruine: Besides, that the fortune of Princes has many things attending it, that are but too apt to train 'em out of the way: As Pleasure, Liberty, Flattery, Excess, for which cause, he should, the more diligently endeavour, and set a watch o're himself, lest perhaps he be led aside, and fail in his duty: Lastly, to say nothing of Treasons, ill will, and such other Mischiefs he's in jeopardy of, That that True King is over his head, who in a short time, will call him to account, for every the least

least trespass, and that so much the more severely, by how much more mighty was the Empire, committed to his charge: These and the like, if a Prince should duly weigh (and weigh it he would, if he were wise) he would neither be able to sleep, nor take any hearty repast: But now, by my courtesie, they leave all this care to the Gods, and are onely taken up with themselves, not admitting any one to their eare, but such as know how to speak pleasant things, and not trouble 'em with business: They believe they have discharg'd all the duty of a Prince, if they Hunt every day, keep a Stable of fine Horses, sell Dignities, and Commanderies, and invent new wayes of draining the Citizens Purse, and bringing it into their own Exchequer; but under such dainty new-found names, that though the thing be most unjust in it self, it carries yet, some face of equity; adding to this, some little sweetnings, that what ever happens, they may be secure of the common people; And now, suppose some one, such as they sometimes are, a man ignorant of Laws, little less than an enemy to the publique good, and minding nothing but his own, given up to Pleasure, a hater of Learning, Liberty, and Justice, studying nothing less than the publique safety, but measuring every thing by his own will, and profit; And then, put on him, a golden



Chain, that declares the accord of all Vertues, linkt one to another ; a Crown set with Diamonds, that should put him in mind, how he ought to excell all others, in Heroick Vertues ; besides, a Scepter, the Emblem of Justice, and an untainted heart ; and lastly, a Purple Robe, a Badge of that Charity he owes the Common-wealth ; All which, if a Prince should compare 'em, with his own life, he would, I believe, be clearly asham'd of his bravery, and be afraid lest some or other gibing Expounder, turn all this Tragical Furniture, into a ridiculous Laughing-stock. And as to the Court-Lords, what should I mention them ? than most of whom, though there be nothing more indebted, more servile, more witless, more contemptible, yet they would seem, as they were the most excellent of all others. And yet in this only thing, no men more modest, in that they are contented to wear about 'em, Gold, Jewels, Purple, and those other marks of Vertue, and Wisdom, but for the study of the things themselves, they remit it to others ; Thinking it happiness enough for them, that they can call the King Master, have learnt the cringe *a la mode*, know when and where to use those Titles, of Your Grace, My Lord, Your Magnificence ; in a word, that they are past all shame, and can  
flatter

flatter pleasantly : for these are the Arts that speak a man truly Noble, and an exact Cour- tier : But if ye look into their manner of life, you'll find 'em meer Sots, ( *Sponſos Penelopeſ,* &c. ) as debauched as *Penelope's* Husband, you know the other part of the verse, which the Echo will better tell ye, than I can : They sleep till noon, and have their mercenary Le- vite come to their bed side, where he chops over his Mattins before they are half up : Then to Break-fast, which is scarce done, but Din- ner staies for 'em ; From thence, they go to Dice, Tables, Cards, or entertain themselves with Jesters, Fools, Gambolls, Horse-tricks, and now and then, the Whore : In the mean time, they have one or two Bevers, and then Supper, and after that a Banquet ; and 'twere well, by *Jupiter*, there were no more than one : And in this manner do their Hours, Dayes, Moneths, Years, Age, slide away without the least irksomeness : Nay, I have sometimes gone away, many Inches fatter, to see 'em, ( *μεγαλορρηνας* ) speak bigg words ; whiles each of the Ladies, believes her self so much nearer to the Gods, by how much the longer train, she trails after her ; whiles one Noble- man edges out another, that he may get the nearer to *Jupiter*, himself ; and every one of 'em, pleases himself the more, by how massier

is the Chain, he swaggs on his shoulders, as if he meant to shew his strength, as well as his wealth. Nor are Princes by themselves in their manner of life, since Popes, Cardinals, and Bishops, have so diligently follow'd their steps, that they've almost got the start of 'em: for if any of 'em would consider, what their *Albe* should put 'em in mind of, to wit, a blameless life; what is meant by their forked Miters, whose each point is held in by the same knot, wee'll suppose it, a perfect knowledge of the Old and New Testaments; what those *Gloves* on their Hands, but a sincere administration of the Sacraments, and free from all touch of worldly business; what their *Crozier*, but a careful looking after the Flock committed to their charge; what the *Cross* born before 'em, but victory over all earthly affections; These, I say, and many of the like kind, should any one truly consider, would he not live a sad and troublesome life? whereas now, they do well enough, while they feed themselves onely; and for the care of their Flock, either put it over to Christ, or lay it all on their Suffragans, as they call 'em, or some poor Vicars: Nor do they so much as remember their name, or what the word Bishop signifies; to wit, Labour, Care and Trouble; But in racking to gather moneys, they

they truly act the part of Bishops ( *ἐν ἡμετέροις* ) and herein acquit themselves to be no blind Seers : In like manner Cardinals, if they thought themselves the successors of the Apostles, they would likewise imagine, that the same things, the other did, are requir'd of them, and that they are not Lords, but Dispensers of Spiritual things, of which, they must shortly give an exact account: But if they also, would a little Philosophize on their Habit, and think with themselves, what's the meaning of their Linen Rochet? Is it not a remarkable and singular integrity of life? What that inner Purple? is it not an earnest, and fervent love of God? Or what that outward, whose loose Plaits, and long Train, fall round his Reverence's Mule, and are large enough to cover a Camel? is it not Charity, that spreads it self so wide, to the succour of all men; that is, to Instruct, Exhort, Comfort, Reprehend, Admonish, compose Wars, resist wicked Princes, and willingly expend, not onely their Wealth, but their very Lives for the Flock of Christ? Though yet, what need at all of wealth, to them, that supply, the room of the poor Apostles? These things, I say, did they but duely consider, they would not be so ambitious of that Dignity, or, if they were, they would willingly leave it, and live

a laborious careful life, such as was that of the antient Apostles: And for Popes, that supply the place of Christ, if they should endeavour to imitate his Life, to wit, his Poverty, Labour, Doctrine, Cross, and contempt of Life, or should they consider, what the name Pope, that is Father, or Holiness, imports, who would live more disconsolate than themselves? or who would purchase that Chair, with all his substance? or defend it so purchast, with Swords, Poisons, and all force imaginable? so great a profit, would the access of Wisdom, deprive him of; Wisdom did I say? nay the least corn of that Salt, which Christ speaks of: So much Wealth, so much Honour, so much Riches, so many Victories, so many Offices, so many Dispensations, so much Tribute, so many Pardons; such Horses, such Mules, such Guards, and so much Pleasure, would it lose them: You see how much I have comprehended in a little: instead of which, it would bring in, Watchings, Fastings, Tears, Prayers, Sermons, good Endeavours, Sighs, and a thousand the like troublesome Exercises: Nor is this least considerable; so many Scribes, so many Copying Clerks, so many Notaries, so many Advocates, so many Promooters, so many Secretaries, so many Muleters, so many Grooms, so many Bankers,

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so many Bawds ( I had like to have added somewhat more Effeminate, but that I'm afraid 'twould be too harsh for their ears : ) in short, that vast multitude of men, that overcharge the Roman Sea ( I mistook, I meant, Honour ) might beg their bread : A most inhumane and abominable thing ; and more to be execrated, that those great Princes of the Church, and true Lights of the World, should be reduc'd to a Staff, and a Wallet : whereas now, if there be any thing that requires their pains, they leave that, to *Peter* and *Paul*, that have leisure enough ; But if there be any thing of Honour, or Pleasure, they take that, to themselves : By which means it is, yet by my courtesie, that scarce any kind of men, live more voluptuously, or with less trouble, as believing, that Christ will be well enough pleas'd, if in their Mystical, and almost mimical Pontificalibus, Ceremonies, Titles of Honinefs, and the like, and Blessing, and Curling, they play the parts of Bishops : To work Miracles, is old, and antiquated, and not in fashion now ; to instruct the people, troublesome ; to interpret the Scripture, Pedantick ; to pray, a sign one has little else to do ; to shed tears, silly, and womanish ; to be poor, base ; to be vanquisht, dishonourable, & little becoming him, that scarce admits even Kings to kiss his

his Slipper ; and lastly, to dye, uncouth ; and to be stretcht on a Cross, infamous : Theirs are only those Weapons, and sweet Blessings which *Paul* mentions, and of these truly they are bountiful enough ; as Interdictions, Hangings, Heavy Burthens, Reproofs, Anathema's, Executions in Effigie, and that terrible Thunder-bolt of Excommunication, with the very sight of which, they sink mens Souls, beneath the bottom of Hell ; which yet these most holy Fathers in Christ, and his Vicars, hurl with more fierceness, against none, than against such, as by the instigation of the Devil, attempt to lessen, or rob 'em of *Peters* Patrimony ; when, though those words in the Gospel, *We have left all, and follow'd thee*, were his, yet they call his Patrimony, Lands, Cities, Tribute, imposts, Riches ; for which, being enflam'd with the love of Christ, they contend with Fire, and Sword, and not without losse of much Christian blood, and believe, they have then, most Apostolically defended the Church, the Spouse of Christ, when the enemy, as they call 'em, are valiantly routed ; As if the Church had any deadlier enemies, than wicked Prelates, who not onely suffer Christ to run out of request, for want of preaching him, but hinder his spreading, by their multitudes of Laws, meerly contriv'd for their own profit;

corrupt him, by their forc'd Explications ; and murder him, by the evil example, of their pestilent life : Nay further, whereas the Church of Christ was founded in blood, confirm'd by blood, and augmented by blood, now, as if Christ, who after his wonted manner defends his people, were lost, they govern all by the sword ; And whereas War, is so Savage a thing, that it rather befits Beasts, than Men, so outrageous, that the very Poets feign'd, it came from the Furies, so pestilent, that it corrupts all mens manners, so unjust, that it is best executed, by the worst of men, so wicked, that it has no agreement with Christ, and yet, omitting all the other, they make this, their only business : Here you'll see decrepit old fellows, acting the parts of young men, neither troubled at their costs, nor wear'd with their labours, nor discourag'd at any thing, so they may have the liberty, of turning Laws, Religion, Peace, and all things else, quite topsie turvie : Nor are they destitute of their learned Flatterers, that call that palpable Madness, Zeal, Piety, and Valour, having found out a new way, by which, a man may kill his brother, without the least breach of that Charity, which, by the command of Christ, one Christian owes another : And here in troth, I'm a little at a stand, whether the Eccle-

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clerical German Electors, gave 'em this example, or rather took it from 'em; who laying aside their Habit, Benedictions, and the like Ceremonies, so act the part of Commanders, that they think it a mean thing, and least befitting a Bishop, to shew the least courage to God-ward, unless it be in a battle. And as to the common Heard of Priests, they account it a crime, to degenerate from the Sanctity of their Prelates; *Heidab!* how Soldier-like they baffle, about the *jus divinum* of Titles, and how quick-lighted they are, to pick the least thing, out of the Writings of the Antients, wherewith they may fright the common people, and convince 'em, if possible that more than a Tenth is due: yet in the mean-time, it least comes in their heads, how many things, are every where extant, concerning that duty, which they owe the people: Nor does their shorn Crown, in the least admonish 'em, that a Priest, should be free from all worldly desires, and think of nothing but heavenly things; whereas, on the contrary, these jolly fellows, say, they have sufficiently discharg'd their Office, if they but any-how mumble over a few odd Prayers, which, so help me *Hercules*, I wonder if any God either hear, or understand, since they do neither themselves; especially, when they

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thunder 'em out, in that manner they are wont : But this they have in common, with those of the Heathens, that they are vigilant enough to the harvest of their profit, nor is there any of 'em, that is not better read, in those Laws, than the Scripture ; whereas, if there be any thing burthensome, they prudently lay that on othermens shoulders, and shift it from one to t'other, as men toss a Ball, from hand to hand ; following herein, the example of Lay Princes, who commit the Government of their Kingdoms, to their Grand Ministers, and they again, to others, and leave all study of Piety to the common people : In like manner, the common people, put it over to those they call Ecclesiasticks, as if themselves, were no part of the Church, or that their vow in Baptism, had lost its obligation : Again, the Priests, that call themselves Secular, as if they were initiated to the world, not to Christ, lay the burthen on the Regulars, the Regulars, on the Monks, the Monks, that have more liberty, on those that have less, and all of 'em, on the Mendicants ; the Mendicants, on the Carthusians, amongst whom, if any where, this Piety lies buried, but yet so close, that scarce any one can perceive it : In like manner the Popes, the most diligent of all others, in gathering in the Harvest of mony,

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refer all their Apostolical work to the Bishops; the Bishops, to the Parsons; the Parsons, to the Vicars, the Vicars, to their brother Mendicants, and they again throw back the care of the Flock, on those that take the Wooll: But it is not my business, to sift too narrowly, the lives of Prelates, and Priests, for fear I seem to have intended, rather a Satyr, than an Oration; and be thought to tax good Princes, while I praise the bad: And therefore, what I slightly taught before, has been to no other end, but that it might appear, that there's no man, can live pleasant, unless he be initiated to my Rites, and have me propitious to him: For how can it be otherwise, when Fortune, the great Directress of all Humane Affairs, and my self, are so all one, that she was always an enemy to those wise men, and on the contrary, so favourable to Fools, and careless fellows, that all things hit luckily to 'em? You have heard of that *Timotheus* (the most fortunate General of the *Athenians*) of whom came that Proverb ( *ἡ εὐδαιμονία κέρτος αἰρεῖ* ) His Net caught fish, though he were asleep; and that, ( *γλαυξ ἵπλεται* ) The Owl flies: whereas these other, hit properly, Wise men ( *ἐν τετραδὶ γέννηθῆντες* ) born in the fourth moneth; And again ( *Equum habet Scjannus; & Asinum Tolosanum:* ) He rides *Scjannus's*

Erasmus's *his Horse*; and gold of *Tolouse*; signifying thereby, the extremity of ill fortune: But I forbear (*παρομυσαζέσθαι*) the further threading of Proverbs, lest I seem to have pilfer'd, my friend *Erasmus's* Adagies: Fortune loves those, that have least wit, and most confidence, and such, as like that saying of *Caesar*, (*Facta est alea*) the Dye is thrown; but Wisdom makes men bashful, which is the reason, that those Wise men have so little to do, unless it be with Poverty, Hunger, and Chimney-corners; that they live such neglected, unknown, and hated lives; whereas Fools, abound in money, have the chief Commands in the Commonwealth, and, in a word, flourish every way: for if it be a happiness (*Principibus placuisse viris*——) to please Princes, and to be conversant among those Golden and Diamond Gods, what is more unprofitable than Wisdom, or what is it these kind of men have, may more justly be censur'd? If Wealth is to be got, how little good at it, is that Merchant like to do, if following the Precepts of Wisdom, he should boggle at Perjury, or being taken in a lie, blush, or in the least, regard the sad scruples, of those Wisemen, touching Rapine, and Usury: Again, if a man sue for Honours, or Church-Preferments, an Ass, or wild Oxe shall sooner get

'em than a Wise man : If a man's in love with a young Wench, none of the least Humors in this Comedy, they are wholly addicted to Fools, and are afraid of a Wise man, and flie him, as they would a Scorpion : Lastly, whoever intend to live merry, and frolique, shut their doors against Wise men, and admit any thing sooner : In brief, go whither ye will, among Prelates, Princes, Judges, Magistrate, Friends, Enemies, from highest to lowest, and you'll find all things done by money; which, as a VVise man contemns it, so it takes a special care, not to come near him : what shall I say ? There is no measure, or end of my praises, and yet 'tis fit my Oration have an end : And therefore I'll ev'n break off; and yet, before I do it, 'twill not be amiss if I briefly shew ye, that there has not been wanting, even great Authours, that have made me famous, both by their VVritings, and Actions; lest perhaps otherwise, I may seem, to have foolishly pleas'd my self only, or that the Lawyers charge me, that I have prov'd nothing : After their example therefore, will I alleadge my proofs, that is to say ( *ὡς ἐν πρὸς ἑπὶ* ) nothing to the point : And first, every man allows this Proverb, That where a man wants matter, he may best frame some. And to this purpose is that

Verse

## The Praise of Folly.

Verse which we teach Children

(*Stultitiam simulare loco, prudentia summa est*)  
'Tis the greatest wisdom to know when and where to counterfeit the Fool; And now, judge your selves, what an excellent thing this Folly is, whose very counterfeit, and semblance only, has got such praise from the Learned: But more candidly does that fat, plump (*---Epicuri de grege Porcus*) Epicurean bacon-hogg, Horace (for so he calls himself) bids us (*Misce stultitiam consiliis---*) mingle our purposes with Folly; and whereas he adds the word (*brevem*) short (perhaps to help out the Verse) he might as well have let it alone: And again (*Dulce est desipere in loco*) 'tis a pleasant thing to play the fool, in the right season: And in another place, he had rather (*--- Delirus inersque videri, Quam sapere, & ringi ---*) be accounted a dottrel, and sot, than to be wise, and made mouths at: And *Telemachus* in *Homer*, whom the Poet praises so much, is now and then, call'd (*νῆπιος*) Fool; and by the same name, as if there were some good fortune in 't, are the Tragedians wont, to call Boyes and Striplings: And what does that sacred book of *Iliads* contain, but a kind of counter-scuffle between foolish Kings, and foolish People? Besides, how absolute is that praise, that *Cicero* gives of it? (*Stultorum plena sunt omnia*) All things are

full of fools : for who does not know, that every good, the more diffusive it is, by so much the better it is? But perhaps their authority, may be of small credit among Christians, wee'l therefore, if you please, support our praises with some Testimonies of holy Writ also : In the first place neverthelesse, having forespoke our Theologues, that they'll give us leave to do it without offence : And in the next, forasmuch as we attempt a matter of some difficulty, and it may be perhaps, a little too sawcy, to call back agen, the Muses from *Helicon*, to so great a journey, especially in a matter, they are wholly strangers to, it will be more sutable perhaps, while I play the Divine, and make my way through such prickly quiddities, that I entreat the Soul of *Scotus* (a thing more bristlely than either *Porcupine* or *Hedg-hog*) to leave his *Scorbone* a while, and come into my brest, and then, let him go whither he pleases (vel is *αβεγρας*) or to the dogs : I could wish also, that I might change my countenance, or that I had on, the square Cap, and the Cassock, for fear some or other should impeach me of theft, as if I had privily rifled our Masters Desks, in that I have got so much Divinity : but it ought not to seem so strange, if after so long and intimate an acquaintance, and converse with 'em, I have pickt up somewhat ; when as that Fig-



tree-god *Priapus*, hearing his owner read certain Greek words, took so much notice of 'em, that he got 'em by heart; and that Cock in *Lucian*, by having liv'd long amongst men, became at last a master of their Language : But to the point (*bonis avibus*) under a fortunate direction : *Ecclesiastes* saith in his first Chapter, (*Stultorum infinitus numerus*) The number of fools is infinite; and when he calls it infinite, does he not seem to comprehend all men, unlesse it be some few, whom yet, 'tis a question whether any man ever saw? But more ingenuously does *Jeremiah*, in his tenth Chapter confess it, saying, (*Stultus omnis, &c.*) Every man is made a fool, through his own wisdom; attributing wisdom to God alone, and leaving folly to all men else : And again (*Nec gloriatur homo, &c.*) Let not man glory in his wisdom; And why good *Jeremiah* wouldst thou not have a man glory in his wisdom? Because, he'll say, he has none at all : But to return to *Ecclesiastes*, who when he cries out, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, What other thoughts had he, do ye believe, than that, as I said before, The life of man, is nothing else, but an enterlude of *Folly*? in which, (*album addidit calculum*) he has added one voice more, to that justly receiv'd praise of *Cicer*'s, which I quoted before, *viz. All things are full of fools* : Again, that wise Preacher that



said, A fool changes as the Moon, but a wise man, is permanent as the Sun : What else did he hint at in it, but that all mankind are fools, and the name of VVise, onely proper to God : for by the Moon, Interpreters understand humane Nature, and by the Sun, God, the only Fountain of light ; with which, agrees that which Christ himself, in the Gospel denies, That any one is to be call'd good, but one, and that is God : And then, if he is a fool, that is not wise, and every good man according to the *Stoicks*, is a wise man, it is no wonder, if all mankind, be concluded under *Folly* : Again, *Solomon*, Chap. 15. Foolishnesse, saith he, is joy to the Fool, thereby plainly confessing, that without folly there is no pleasure in life : To which, is pertinent that other ( *Quis apponit Scientiam, &c.* ) He that encreaseth knowledge, encreaseth grief ; and in much understanding, there is much indignation : And does he not plainly confess as much, *Chap. 7. The heart of the wise is where sadness is, but the heart of fools follows mirth* : by which you see, he thought it not enough, to have learnt wisdom, without he had added the knowledge of me also : And if ye will not believe me, take his own words, *Chap. 1. Dedi cor meum, &c.* ) I gave my heart to know wisdom and knowledge, madnesse and folly : VVhere, by the way, 'tis worth

worth your remark, that he intended me somewhat extraordinary, that he nam'd me last; A Preacher writ it; and this you know, is the order among Church-men, that he that is first in Dignity, comes last in place, as mindful, no doubt, what ever they do in other things, herein at least to observe the Evangelical precept: Besides, That Folly is more excellent than Wisdom, the Son of *Sirach*, who ever he were, clearly witnesseth, *Chap. 44.* whose words, so help me *Hercules*, I shall not once utter before you meet (*ισαχυρην* meam) my Induction, with a sutable answer, according to the manner of those in *Plato*, that dispute with *Socrates*: What things are more proper to be laid up with care, such as are rare and precious, or such as are common, and of no account? Why do you give me no answer? Well, though ye should dissemble, the *Greek* Proverb will answer for ye (*ἐπὶ θυρᾷ ὀφθαλμοῦ*) Fowl Water, is thrown out of doors; which, if any man shall be so ungratious as to contemn, let him know 'tis *Aristotle's*; the god of our Masters: Is there any of ye so very a Fool as to leave Jewels, and Gold in the street? In troth, I think not; in the most secret part of your Houses, nor is that enough if there be any Drawer in your Iron Chests, more private than other, there ye lay 'em; but dirt, ye

ye throw out of doors : And therefore if ye so carefully lay up such things as you value, and throw away what's vile, and of no worth, Is it not plain, that Wisdom, which he forbids a man to hide, is of less account than Folly, which he commands him to cover : Take his own words, Better is the man that hideth his Folly, than he that hideth his Wisdom : Or what is that, when he attributes an upright mind, without Craft or Malice to a Fool, when a wise man the while, thinks no man like himself ? For so I understand that in his Tenth Chap. (*In via stultus*, &c.) A Fool walking by the way, being a fool himself, supposes all men to be fools like him : And is it not a signe of great integrity, to esteem every man as good as himself, and when there is no one that leans not too much to'ther way, to be so frank yet, as to divide his praises with another ? Nor was this great King asham'd of the Name, when he says of himself, that he is more foolish than any man : Nor did *Paul*, that great Doctor of the *Gentiles*, writing to the *Corinthians*, unwillingly acknowledg it ; I speak, saith he, like a fool : I am more : As if it could be any dishonour to excel in Folly : But here I meet with a great noise of some, that endeavour (*Cornicum oculos configere*) to peck out the Crows eyes ; that is, to blind the Doctors of our

our times; and I moak out their eyes with new Annotations; among whom, my friend *Erasmus*, whom for honours sake, I often mention, deserves (*si non Alpha, certe Beta*) if not the first place, yet certainly the second; O most foolish instance, they cry, and well becoming Folly her self! The Apostles meaning was wide enough, from what thou dream'st; for he spake it not in this sense, that he would have them believe him a greater fool than the rest, but when he had said, They are Ministers of Christ, the same am I; and by way of boasting herein, had equal'd himself with to'thers, he added this by way of correction, or checking himself, I am more: As meaning, that he was not onely equal to the rest of the Apostles, in the work of the Gospel, but somewhat superiour: And therefore, while he would have this receiv'd as a Truth, lest nevertheless, it might not relish their eares, as being spoken with too much Arrogance, he foreshorten'd his Argument, with the V zard of Folly: I speak like a fool, because he knew it was the Prerogative of fools, to speak what they list, and that too without offence: Whatever he thought when he writ this, I leave it to them to discuss; for my own part, I follow those fat, fleshie, and —vulgarly approv'd Doctors, with whom (*ὡς τὰς Δία*) by *Jupiter*!

a great part of the learned had rather err than follow them, that understand the Tongues, though they are never so much in the right; nor any of 'em make greater account, of (*Graculas istas quam graculos*) those smatterers at Greek, than if they were Dawes; especially when a no small Professor (whose name, I wittingly conceal, lest those Choughs should chatter at me that Greek Proverb, I have so often mentioned (*'Ovos λυγας*) an Ass at a Harp) discoursing Magisterially and Theologically on this Text (I speak as a fool, I am more:) drew a new Thesis, and, which without the height of Logick, he could never have done, made this new Subdivision: (for I'll give ye his own words, not onely in form, but matter also:) I speak like a fool: That is, If you look upon me as a fool, for comparing my self with those false Apostles, I shall seem yet a greater fool, by esteeming my self before 'em; though the same person a little after, as forgetting himself, runs off to another matter: But why do I thus staggeringly defend my self, with one single instance? As if it were not the common priviledg of Divines to stretch Heaven, that is, Holy Writ, like a Cheverel; and when, there are many things in *St. Paul*, that thwart themselves, which yet, in their proper place, do well enough if there be any credit

credit to be given (*Ἰλλί πειλαγλωτῆρ* Hieronymo) to St. Jerom, that was Matter of five Tongues. Such was that of his at Athens, when having casually espi'd the inscription of that Altar, he wrested it into an Argument, to prove the Christian Faith, and leaving out all the other words, because they made against him, took notice onely of the two last, *viz.* (*Ignoto Deo*) To the unknown God; and those too, not without some alteration, for the whole Inscription was thus: To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa; To the unknown and strange Gods: And according to his example do (*οἱ τῶν θεολόγων παῖδες*) the Sons of the Prophets, who forcing out here and there four or five Expressions, and if need be corrupting the sense, wrest it to their own purpose; though what goes before, and follows after, make nothing to the matter in hand; nay, be quite against it: Which yet they do, with so happy an impudence, that oftentimes the *Civilians* envie them that faculty: For what is it in a manner, they may not hope for success in, when this great Doctour (I had almost bolted out his name, but that I once ageristand in fear of the Greek Proverb) has made a construction on an expression of Luke, so agreeable to the mind of Christ, as are Fire and Water, to one another: For when the  
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last point of danger was at hand, at which time, retainers and dependants, are wont in a more special manner to attend their Protectors, to examine what strength they have, and prepare (συνμαχεῖν) for the encounter. Christ intending to take out of his Disciples minds, all trust and confidence in such like defence, demands of them, Whether they wanted any thing, when he sent them forth so unprovided for a journey, that they had neither shoes to defend their feet from the injuries of stones and briers, nor the provision of a scrip, to preserve 'em from hunger; And when they had denied that they wanted any thing, he adds; But now, he that hath a bagg, let him take it, and likewise a scrip: and he that hath none, let him sell his coat and buy a sword: And now, when the summe of all that Christ taught, prest onely Meekness, Suffering, and Contempt of life, who does not clearly perceive what he means in this place? To wit, that he might the more disarm his Ministers, that neglecting not onely Shoos and Scrip, but throwing away their very Coat, they might, being in a manner naked, the more readily and with less hindrance, take in hand the work of the Gospel, and provide themselves of nothing but a sword, not such as Thieves and Murtherers go up and down with, but the Sword of the Spirit,

rit, that pierceth the most inward parts, & so cuts  
off as it were at one blow, all earthly affections,  
that they mind nothing, but their duty to God:  
But see, I pray, whither this famous Theologue  
wrests it: By the Sword, he interprets, de-  
fence against persecution; and by the Baggs,  
sufficient provilion to carry it on: As if Christ  
having alter'd his mind, in that he sent out his  
Disciples (*παρὰ τὴν βασιλείαν*) not so royally at-  
tended as he should have done, repented him-  
self of his former instructions; or, as forgetting  
that he had said, (*Blessed are ye when ye are evil  
spoken of, despised, and persecuted, &c.* and for-  
bad 'em to resist evil, for that the meek in Spi-  
rit, not the proud, are blessed) or, lest remem-  
bring, I say, that he had compar'd them to Spar-  
rows and Lillies, thereby minding them, what  
small care they should take, for the things of this  
life, was so far now, from having them go forth  
without a Sword, that he commanded 'em to get  
one though with the sale of their Coat, and had  
rather they should go naked, than want a braw-  
ling-iron by their sides: And to this, as un-  
der the word *Sword*, he conceives to be com-  
prehended what ever appertains to the repel-  
ling of injuries; so under that of *Scrip*, he takes  
in, whatever is necessary, to the support of  
life: And so does this deep Interpreter of the  
divine meaning, bring forth the Apostles, to  
preach

preach the Doctrine of a crucified Christ, but  
 furnish at all points, with Launces, Slings,  
 Quarter-staffs, and Slings; Lading 'em also,  
 with bag and baggage, lest perhaps, it might  
 not be lawful for 'em, to leave their Inn, un-  
 lesse they were empty and fasting: Nor does he  
 take the least notice of this, that he that so will'd,  
 the Sword to be bought, reprehends it a little  
 after, and commands it to be sheath'd, and  
 that it was never heard, that the Apostles ever  
 us'd, or swords or bucklers against the Gentiles,  
 though 'tis likely they had don't, if Christ had  
 ever intended, as this Doctor interprets:  
 There is another too, whose name out of re-  
 spect, I pass by, a man of no small repute, who  
 from those Tents, which *Habakkuk* mentions  
 (*Turbabuntur pelles, &c.*) *The Tents of the land*  
*of Midian shall tremble*, drew this Exposition,  
 that it was prophesied of the skin of Saint *Bar-*  
*tholomew*, who was flay'd alive: and why  
 (forsooth) but because those Tents were  
 cover'd with skins? I was lately my self  
 at a Theological dispute (for I am of-  
 ten there) where, when one was demanding,  
 What authority there was in holy Writ, that  
 commands Hereticks to be convinc'd by Fire,  
 rather than reclaim'd by Argument, A crabbed  
 old fellow, and one, whose supercilious gravity  
 spake him at least a Doctor, answered in a great  
 fume,

fume, that Saint *Paul* had decreed it, who said, (*Hæreticum hominum, post unam & alteram correptionem, devita*) Reject him that is a Heretick, after once or twice admonition; And when he had sundry times, one after another, thundred out the same thing, and most men wondred what ailed the man, at last he explain'd it thus, (making two words of one) *Devita, hoc est, de vita, tollendum Hæreticum*, A Heretick must be put to death: Some laught, and yet there wanted not others, to whom this Exposition, seem'd plainly Theological; which, when some, though those very few, oppos'd, they cut off the dispute (*Tenedia bipenni*) as we say, with a Hatcher, and the credit of so uncontroulable an Author: Pray conceive me said he; It is written, *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live*: But every Heretick bewitches the people: therefore, &c. And now, as many as were present admir'd the mans wit, and consequently, submitted to his decision of the Question; Nor came it into any of their heads, that that Law concern'd onely Fortune-tellers, Enchanters, and Magicians, whom the Hebrews, call in their Tongue (*משפוח Mecsaschephim*) Witches, or Sorcerers: for otherwise perhaps, by the same reason, it might have as well have extended to fornication, and drunkenness: But I foolishly run on in these matters, though

yet there are so many of 'em, that neither *Chrysippus*, nor *Didymus's* Volumes, are large enough to contain 'em; I would onely desire ye to consider this, That if so great Doctors may be allow'd this liberty, you may the more reasonably pardon, even me also (*συκίνη θεολόγη*) a raw, effeminate Divine, if I quote not every thing so exactly as I should: And so at last I return to *Paul*: (*Libenter, &c.*) ye willingly saith he, suffer my foolishness: And again, Take me as a fool: And further, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly: And in another place, We are fools for Christs sake: You have heard, from how great an Author, how great praises of Folly; And to what other end, but that without doubt, he look'd upon't, as that one thing, both necessary, and profitable? If any one amongst ye (saith he) seem to be wise, let him be a fool, that he may be wise: And in *Luke*, *Jesus* cal'd those two Disciples, with whom he joyn'd himself upon the way, fools: Nor can I give ye any reason, why it should seem so strange, when Saint *Paul* imputes a kind of folly, even to God himself (*Quid stultum est Dei, &c.*) The foolishness of God (saith he) is wiser than men: Though yet I must confess, that *Origen* upon the place, denies, that this foolishness, may be resembled, to the uncertain judgment of men; of which kind, is that

(*Verbum*

(*Verbum crucis, &c.*) The preaching of the cross, is to them that perish, foolishness : But, why am I so careful to no purpose, that I thus run on to prove my matter, by so many testimonies, when in those mystical Psalms, Christ speaking to the Father, sayes openly, (*Tu scis, insipientiam meam*) Thou knowest my foolishnesse : Nor is it without ground, that fools are so acceptable to God : the reason perhaps, may be this, that as Princes carry a suspicious eye upon those that are over-wise, and consequently, hate 'em ; As *Cæsar* did *Brutus* and *Cassius*, when he fear'd not in the least, drunken *Antony* ; so *Nero*, *Seneca* ; and *Dionysius*, *Plato* ; and on the contrary, are delighted in those blunter, and unlabour'd wits ; In like manner Christ, ever abhors and condemns (*recipit istos*) those wise men, and such as put confidence in their own wisdom : And this *Paul* makes clearly out, when he said, (*Quæ stulta sunt mundi, &c.*) God hath chosen the foolish things of this world ; and when he saith, It pleased God by foolishness to save the world ; as well knowing, it had been impossible, to have reform'd it by wisdom : Which also, he sufficiently declares himself, crying out by the mouth of his Prophet, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and cast away the understanding of the prudent : And agen, when Christ gives Him thanks, that

he had conceal'd the Mystery of Salvation from the wise, but revealed it to babes and sucklings, that is to say, Fools : for the Greek word for Babes is *νηπιος*, i. e. *Fool*, which he opposeth to the word *σοφός*, i. e. *Wise men* : To this appertains, that throughout the Gospel, you find him ever accusing the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and Doctors of the Law, but diligently defending the ignorant multitude : for what other is that, *Woe to ye Scribes and Pharises*, than woe to ye, ye wise men ? but seems chiefly delighted in little Children, Women, and Fishers : Besides, among brute Beasts, he is best pleas'd with those, that have least in 'em, of the Foxes subtilty ; And therefore, he chose rather, to ride upon an Ass, when if he had pleas'd, he might have bestrid the Lion, without danger ; And the Holy Ghost came down, in the shape of a Dove, not of an Eagle or Kite ; Add to this, that in Scripture there is frequent mention of Harts, Hinds, and Lambs ; and such as are destin'd to eternal life, are called sheep ; than which creature, there is not any thing more foolish, if we may believe that Proverb of *Aristotle* ( *προβάτων ἥθος* ) sheepish manners ; which he tells us, is taken from the foolishness of that creature, and is us'd to be apply'd, to dull-headed people, and lack-wits ; And yet Christ professes, to be the Shepherd of this Flock,



Flock, and is himself delighted with the name of a Lamb; according to Saint *John*, *Behold the Lamb of God*! Of which also, there is much mention, in the *Revelation*: And what does all this drive at, but that all mankind are fools, nay, even the very best? And Christ himself, that he might the better relieve this Folly, being the wisdom of the Father, yet in some manner, became a fool, when taking upon him the nature of man, he was found in shape as a man; as in like manner, he was made Sin, that he might heal sinners: Nor did he work this Cure, any other way, than by the foolishness of the Cross, and a company of fat Apostles, not much better, to whom also he carefully recommended folly, but gave 'em a caution against wisdom, and drew 'em together, by the Example of little Children, Lillies, Mustard-seed, and Sparrows, things senseless, and inconsiderable, living only by the dictates of Nature, and without either craft or care: Besides, when he forbade 'em to be troubled, about what they should say before Governors, and straightly charg'd 'em, not to enquire after times, and seasons, to wit, that they might not trust to their own wisdom, but wholly depend on him: And to the same purpose is it, that, that great Architect of the World, God, gave man an Injunction against his eating of the Tree of Knowledge, as if knowledge, were the



ban of happinesse ; according to which also,  
 St. *Paul* dis-allows it, as puffing up, and destru-  
 ctive ; whence also, St. *Bernard* seems, in my o-  
 pinion, to follow, when he interprets that moun-  
 tain, whereon *Lucifer* had fixt his habitation, to  
 be the mountain of knowledge : Nor perhaps  
 ought I to omit this other argument, that folly is  
 so gracious above, that her errors are only par-  
 doned, those of wise men, never : Whence it is,  
 that they that ask forgiveness, though they offend  
 never so wittingly, cloak it yet, with the excuse  
 of folly : So *Aaron*, in *Numbers*, if I mistake not  
 the book, when he sues unto *Moses*, concerning  
 his Sisters leprosie ( *Obsecro Domine mi, &c.* ) I  
 beseech thee my Lord, not to lay this sin upon  
 us, which we have foolishly committed : So *Saul*  
 makes his excuse to *David*, For behold (saith he)  
*I did it foolishly* : And again, *David* himself, thus  
 sweetens God, And therefore I beseech thee, O Lord,  
 to take away the trespass of thy Servant, for I have  
 done foolishly ; as if he knew, there was no pardon  
 to be obtain'd, unlesse he had colour'd his of-  
 fence, with folly, and ignorance : And stronger  
 is that of Christ upon the Cross, when he pray'd  
 for his enemies, *Father forgive them* ; nor does he  
 cover their crime, with any other excuse, than  
 that of unwittingnesse ; because, saith he, they  
 know not what they do : In like manner *Paul*, wri-  
 ting to *Timothy*, But therefore, I obtain'd mercy, for  
 that

that I did it ignorantly, through unbelief: And what is the meaning of, I did it ignorantly, but that I did it out of folly, not malice? And what of, Therefore I receiv'd mercy, but that I had not obtain'd it, had I not been made more allowable, through the covert of folly? For us also, makes that mystical Psalmist, though I remembered it not in its right place, *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my ignorances*: You see what two things he pretends, to wit, Youth, whose companion I ever am, and Ignorances, and that in the plural number, a number of multitude, whereby we are to understand, that there was no small company of 'em: But not to run too far, in that which is infinite; to speak briefly, All Christian Religion, seems to have a kind of allyance with folly, and in no respect to have any accord with wisdom: of which, if ye expect proofs, consider first, that boyes, old men, women, and fools, are more delighted with religious, and sacred things than others, and to that purpose, are ever next the Altars, and this they do, by meer impulse of Nature: And in the next place, you see that those first founders of it, were plain, simple persons, and most bitter enemies of Learning: Lastly, there are no sort of fools, seem more out of the way, than are these, whom the zeal of Christian Religion, has once swallow'd up; so that they waste their estates, neglect injuries, suffer them-

selves to be cheated, put no difference between friends and enemies, abhor pleasure, are cram'd with poverty, watchings, tears, labours, reproaches, loathe life, and wish death above all things; in short, they seem senseless to common understanding, as if their minds liv'd elsewhere, and not in their own bodies; which, what else is it, than to be mad? for which reason, you must not think it so strange, if the Apostles seem'd to be drunk with new wine, and if *Paul* appear'd to *Festus* to be mad: But now having once gotten on (τὴν λέοντιν) the Lions skin, Go to, and I'll shew ye, that this happinesse of Christians, which they pursue with so much toil, is nothing else, but a kind of madnesse and folly; far be it, that my words should give any offence, rather consider, my matter: And first, the Christians and Platonicks, do as good as agree in this, that the Soul is plung'd, and fetter'd in the prison of the body, by the grossnesse of which, it is so ty'd up, and hinder'd, that it cannot take a view of, or enjoy things, as they truly are; and for that cause, their master defines Philosophy, to be a contemplation of death, because it takes off the mind, from visible and corporeal objects, than which, death does no more; And therefore, as long as the Soul useth the O-gans of the Body in that right manner it ought, so long it is said to be in good state and condition; but when having  
broke

broke its fetters, it endeavours to get loose, and assayes, as it were, a flight out of that prison, that holds it in, they call it madness; and if this happen through any distemper, or indisposition of the organs, then, by the common consent of every man, 'tis down-right madnesse: And yet we see such kind of men, foretell things to come, understand Tongues and Letters, they never learnt before, and seem as it were, big with a kind of Divinity: Nor is it to be doubted, but that it proceeds from hence, that the mind being somewhat at liberty, from the infection of the body, begins to put forth it self, in its native vigour; and I conceive, 'tis from the same cause, that the like often happens, to sick men, a little before their death, that they discourse in strain above mortality, as if they were inspir'd: Agen, if this happens, upon the score of Religion, though perhaps it may not be the same kind of madness, yet 'tis so near it, that a great many men, would judge it no better, especially, when a few inconsiderable people, shall differ from the rest of the world, in the whole course of their life: And therefore it fares with them, as according to the Fiction of *Plato*, happens to those, that being coopt up in a cave, stand gaping with admiration, at the shadows of things; & that fugitive, who having broke from 'em, and returning to 'em agen, told 'em he had seen, things truly as they

they were, and that they were the most mistaken, in believing there was nothing but pitiful shadows : for as this wise man, pitty'd, and bewail'd, their palpable madness, that were possess'd with so grosse an error; so they, in return, laugh at him, as a doating fool, and cast him out of their company : In like manner, the common sort of men, chiefly admire those things, that are most corporeal, and almost believe, there is nothing beyond 'em ; whereas on the contrary, these devout persons, by how much the nearer, any thing concerns the body, by so much the more they neglect it, and are wholly hurry'd away with the contemplation of things invisible; for the one, give the first place to riches, the next, to their corporal pleasures, leaving the last place to their soul, which yet, most of 'em do scarce believe, because they can't see it with their eyes : On the contrary, the others, first, rely wholly on God the most unchangeable of all things; and next him, yet on this that comes nearest him, they bestow the second on their soul; and lastly, for their body, they neglect that care, and contemn, and fly monies, as superfluity that may be well spar'd; or if they are forc'd to meddle, with any of these things, they do it carelessly, and much against their wills, having, as if they had it not, and possessing, as if they possessed it not : There are also in each  
several

several things, several degrees, wherein they disagree among themselves : And first, as to the senses, though all of 'em, have more or lesse affinity with the body, yet of these, some are more gross, and blockish, as tasting, hearing, seeing, smelling, touching ; some more remov'd from the body, as memory, intellect, and the will : and therefore to which of these the mind applies its self, in that lyes it force : But holy men, because the whole bent of their minds, is taken up with those things, that are most repugnant to these grosser senses, they seem brutish, and stupid, in the common use of them : Whereas on the contrary, the ordinary sort of people, are best at these, and can do least at to'ther, from whence it is, as we have heard, that some of these holy men, have, by mistake, drunk oil, for wine : Agen, in the affections of the mind, some have a greater commerce with the body, than others, as lust, desire of meat, and sleep, anger, pride, envy, with which, holy men are at irreconcilable enmity ; and contrary, the common people, think there's no living without 'em : And lastly, there are certain middle kind of affections, and as it were, natural to every man ; As the love of ones Country, Children, Parents, Friends, and to which, the common people attribute no small matter ; whereas to'ther, strive to pluck 'em out of their mind ; unlesse, insomuch as  
they

they arrive to that highest part of the soul, that they love their Parents, not as Parents, (for what did they get but the body ? though yet we owe it to God, not them) but as good men, or women, and in whom, shines the Image of that highest wisdom, which alone, they call the chiefest good, and out of which, they say there is nothing to be belov'd or desir'd : And by the same rule, do they measure all things else, so that they make lesse account, of whatever is visible, unless it be altogether contemptible, than of those things, which they cannot see : But they say, that in Sacraments, and other religious Duties, there is both body, and Spirit : As in fasting, they count it not enough for a man to abstain from eating ( which the common people take for an absolute Fast ) unless there be also a lessening of his deprav'd affections : As that he be lesse angry, less proud, than he was wont, that the Spirit being less clog'd, with its bodily weight, may be the more intent upon heavenly things : In like manner, in the Eucharist, though, say they, it is not to be esteem'd the less, that 'tis administer'd with Ceremonies, yet of its self, 'tis of little effect, if not hurtful, unless that which is spiritual be added to it, to wit, that which is represented under those visible signs : Now the death of Christ is represented by it, which all men, vanquishing, abolishing, and as  
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it were, burying their carnal affections, ought to exprefs, in their lives and conversations, that they may grow up, to a newness of life, and be one with him, and the same, one amongst another : This a holy man does, and in this, is his only meditation : Whereas on the contrary, the common people think there's no more in that Sacrifice, than to be present at the Altar, and crow'd next it, to have a noise of words, and look upon the Ceremonies : Nor in this alone, which we onely propos'd by way of example, but in all his life, and without hypoc risie, does a holy man fly those things, that have any alliance with the body, and is wholly ravish'd, with things Eternal, Invisibile, and Spiritual: for which cause, there's so great a contrariety of opinion between 'em, and that too, in every thing, that each party, thinks the other out of their wits; though that character, in my judgment, better agrees with those holy men, than the common people : which yet, will be more clear, if as I promis'd, I briefly shew ye, that that great reward, they so much fancy, is nothing else but a kind of madness : And therefore suppose, that *Plato* dreamt of somewhat like it, when he call'd the madness of Lovers, the most happy condition, of all others : for he that's violently in Love, lives not in his own body, but in the thing he loves; and by how much the farther he runs  
from



from himself, into another by so much the greater is his pleasure; and then, when the mind strives to rove from its body, and does not rightly use its own organs, without doubt, you may say, 'tis downright madnesse, and not be mistaken: or otherwise, what's the meaning of those common sayings (*Non est apud se: Ad te redi: Sibi redditus est*) He does not dwell at home: Come to your self: He's his own man again? Besides, the more perfect, and true, his love is, the more pleasant is his madness: And therefore, what is that life hereafter, after which, these holy minds, so pantingly breathe, like to be? To wit, the Spirit shall swallow up the Body, as conqueror, and more durable; and this it shall do, with the greater ease, because heretofore, in its life-time, it had cleans'd and thinn'd it into such another nothing as its self: And then, the Spirit agen, shall be wonderfully swallow'd up, by that highest mind, as being more powerful, than infinite parts; So that the whole man is to be out of himself, nor to be otherwise happy in any respect, but that being stript of himself, he shall participate of somewhat ineffable, from that chiefest good, that draws all things into its self: And this happiness, though 'tis only then perfected, when souls being joyn'd to their former bodies, shall be made immortal, yet forasmuch as the life of holy men,

men, is nothing but a continu'd meditation, and as it were shadow of that life, it so happens, that at length, they have some taste or relish of it; which, though it be but as the smallest drop, in comparison of that fountain of eternal happiness, yet it far surpasses all worldly delight, though all the pleasures of all mankind, were all joyn'd together: So much better are things spiritual, than things corporal, and things invisible, than things visible; which doubtless is that, which the Prophet promiset, The eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to consider, what God has provided for them that love him: And this is that, *Mary's* better part, which is not taken away, by change of life, but perfected: And therefore, they that are sensible of it (and few there are, to whom this happens) suffer a kind of somewhat, little differing from madness; for they utter many things, that do not hang together, and that too, not after the manner of men; but make a kind of sound, which they neither heed themselves, nor is it understood by others, and change the whole figure of their countenance; One while jocund, another while dejected, now weeping, then laughing, and again sighing: And when they come to themselves, tell ye, they know not where they have been, whether in the body, or out of the body, or sleeping;

sleeping ; nor do they remember what they have heard, seen, spoken, or done, and only know this, as it were in a mist or dream, that they were the most happy, while they were so out of their wits ; And therefore they are sorry, they are come to themselves agen, and desire nothing more, than this kind of madnesse, to be perpetually mad : And this is a small taste of that future happiness. But I forget my self, and ( ὑπὲρ τὰ ἰσχαμμένα πηδῶ ) run beyond my bounds ; Though yet, if I shall seem, to have spoken any thing more boldly, or impertinently, than I ought, be pleas'd to consider, that not only Folly, but a Woman said it ; remembring in the mean time, that Greek Proverb ( πολλάκι τοι ἐμωρὸς ἀνὴρ κατακλίσιον εἶπεν ) *Sometimes a fool may speak a word in season ;* unlesse perhaps you'll say, this concerns not Women. I see you expect an Epilogue, but give me leave to tell ye, you are much mistaken, if you think I remember any thing, of what I have said, having foolishly bolted out, such a hodge podg of words : 'Tis an old Proverb ( Μισῶ μνάμονα συμπτῶν ) *I hate one that remembers what's done over the Cup :* This is a new one of my own making ( Μισῶ μνάμονα ἀχροατὴν ) *I hate a man that remembers what he hears :* Wherefore, farewell, clap your hands, live, and drink lustick, my most excellent Disciples of Folly.

Τέλος. FINIS.

